STUDIES IN KASHMIRI

To my dear friend,
DR B. N. Khashu,
to whom I owe so much
of affection and kindness,

[signature]
27 August, 1972

Manzoor Ahmed Doikoo (M.I.L)
from Pathe Masjid
[signature]
16/8/94

JAYALAL KAUL

Studies in Kashmiri

Manzoor Ahmed Doikoo Khanyar

KAPOOR BROTHERS,
SRINAGAR, KASHMIR.

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While the author acknowledges with thanks
the grant of subsidy by Jammu and Kashmir Academy
for printing this book, he wishes to say
that the Academy is in no way responsible for the
statements made and opinions expressed in the book.

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PREFACE

This book has been published for several good reasons. The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages approved it for publication and made a grant of subsidy for printing it; Kapoor Brothers, Booksellers and Publishers, showed enterprise and a welcome reasonableness in accepting the terms I offered; this publication may restrain a Miss Kaumudi D. Phil. from quoting without acknowledgement my translations of Kashmiri into English *(Kashmir: Its Heritage)*;* it may give the non-Kashmiri people of the State and outside a general idea of Kashmiri literature; and above all, it may help future writers to improve upon this, the first attempt of the kind.

There is some inevitable repetition in the general surveys, chapters two and twelve, and the particular studies on individual poets and specific art-forms, chapters four to eleven. The last chapter on the contemporary literary scene has been included at the express suggestion of the Academy to bring these studies up to date. Altogether they form, with a few lacunae, what could alternatively be called a "History of Kashmiri Literature"; for, the detached arrangement of the chapters notwithstanding, what is left out is at present unknown or available only in libraries outside Kashmir.

The translations attempted are faithful and close to the original. I have resisted the temptation of sacrificing fidelity to the original to making them more readable as, for instance, Nilla Cram Cook has done in her *The way of the Swan* (Asia)** by combining, in translation, several different songs in one poem though she has acknowledged having based them on my translations in *Kashmiri Lyrics*. I have also quoted from the original, at places rather profusely, when what I said needed

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* (Asia) Pages 45, 65, 66, 70, 88, 90—95.

** Pages 61—69, 87—93, 111—119, 137—38.

illustration from the original ; but I have almost always given the English rendering side by side. This, however, necessitated the devising of a system of transliteration adequately to express the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri. These are explained in the note on transliteration.

I am grateful to the Academy for the subsidy and to Principal S. L. Sadhu for reading the proofs from pages 89 to 288. I must also record my thanks to Muhammad Yusuf Teng, Chamanlal Chaman, Motilal Kemmu and Pran Kishore for relevant material on a few points of the last chapter ; to Miss Urvi Kaul M.A., who read the last two chapters in manuscript, Motilal Raina, Ph. D., who read the last chapter, and T. Jayaraman Ph.D., who read the translations of verse and prose extracts, pages 257-59 and 262-64, for their valuable comments. Particular mention must be made of Trilokinath Raina of the National Defence Academy for readily permitting me to quote from his translations, which are acknowledged wherever they occur, and of G. R. Santosh, who kindly designed the cover page. Acknowledgements are also due to all those poets and writers whose writings have been translated or quoted in the original; to *Visvabharati Quarterly*, *The Indian P. E. N.*, *Indian Literature*, *Poetry*, *East and West*, *1967*, in which a few of the translations of the last two chapters have already appeared; and to the Publications Division, Government of India, for which *Lal Ded* was originally written.

I dedicate the book to the Kashmiri poets and playwrights, essayists, and editors, short story writers and novelists who, in the absence of adequate incentives from official or non-official agencies and, in spite of the indifference of the reading and book-buying public, continue to write in the people's own language. I dedicate it also to the English-educated Kashmiri-speaking Kashmiris who neither know nor care to know what has been and is being written in their own mother tongue.

Kasauli, Simla Hills,
6th June, 1968.

J. L. Kaul

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

A fuller discussion of the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri is given in the first chapter where a complete chart of the Kashmiri alphabet will be found on pages 13-14. A few facts may, however, be elucidated here for ready reference.

To avoid the extra cost and delay in manufacturing new matrices for these phonemes at a foundry, I have had to press into service only the type normally available with the general run of the printing presses. I have, therefore, in a few cases even departed from the letter-symbols and diacritical marks generally recognized and in use in the transliteration of Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Hindi or Urdu in Roman character. I have generally disregarded the origin or derivation of a word and transliterated phonetically, as pronounced in Kashmiri, rather than linguistically, except in some contexts where it seemed inadvisable to do so. I have therefore used, without a dot, a bar or two dots below them, Roman letters as shown below :

t' for ٹ, *s* for ث and ص, *h* for ح, *kh* for خ, *d'* for ڈ, and ڑ, *z* for ذ, ز, ض and ظ, *sh* for ش, श or ष, and, generally, even *g* for غ and *k* for ق, though in some cases *gh* is used for غ and *q* for ق., and *n* for न or ण. I have, however, uniformly used *c* for چ or च and *ch* for چھ or छ and *ts* and *tsh* for the Kashmiri affricates ژ, ژھ or च़, छ़ respectively.

The imperceptible 'ہ' at the end of Persian words like خواجہ (Khwaja), مچلکہ (muclaka), and the semi-mute *matra*-vowel *u'* at the end of a Kashmiri word or syllable is usually represented by the short vowel *a* as in *doha khwata doha, gara path gara*, but to indicate the somewhat stronger articulation in some words or contexts, the letter *u'* is used as in

khandu' ka'rynam vanu'kas ve'see, yaavu'nas qadu'r no zonum, ditu'mo darshun The *n* of tanveen or "nunation" is indicated by *n* as in اتفاقاً, (*ittifaaqan*), مجازاً (*majaazan*). The silent *w* which follows خ in some Persian words like خود (khwud) and which in Kashmiri usually becomes a distinct sound somewhat like *ua* in "quarral", is represented by *wa* as *khwad* in Kashmiri while خواه مخواه is written as pronounced e. g., *khaah makhaah*. The Persian izaafat is generally denoted by the distinct *i* as دردِ سر *dardisar*. Because *w* is used in certain contexts as *wa* above, *v* has been used for و or व when used as a consonant, although *w* could be preferred on account of the analogy with *y*. The letter ع is represented by the Greek spiritus asper (') as '*aashiq* (Kashmiri *aashakh*), 'ishq, 'irfaan, 'unvaan.'

The short vowel *a* has the sound of *u* in *bun* ; the short *i* of *i* in *pin* ; the short *u* of *u* in *bull* ; while their long sounds are, respectively, represented by *a* : or *aa* (which sounds as *a* in *far, father*), *i* : or *ee* (as in *police, caprice*), *u* : or *oo* (as in *prude, rule)*. The long vowel *o* is sounded as in *pole* and its short sound in Kashmiri words like *o'n* (blind), *pro'n* (white), *po'tsh* (guest), *lo't* (light), *o'sh* (teardrops), is indicated by *o'*. The *e*, long, has the sound of *a* in *hay* while its short sound in Kashmiri is indicated by *e'* as in *me'* (me), *she'* (six), *tse'* (to you). On the analogy of the Greek lenis (') representing " alif hamza", the vowel sound peculiar to Kashmiri as in *a'ch* (an eye), *la'r* (a house), which has a sound somewhat like *oe*, is represented by *a'* ; and its long form as in *aa's* (a mouth), *la':r* (a cucumber) by *a'*: or *aa'*. The short vowel sound in *tu'r* (a rag), *khu'r* (a slip), which sounds somewhat like *ui*, is represented by *u'* ; and its long sound, as in *tu':r* (cold), *d'uu's* (a mace), by *u'*: or *uu'*. The sound, somewhat like *e* in *bed, get, scent*, is indicated by *ya* as in *zyav* (*tongue*), *lyav* (lick) ; and the Kashmiri sound somewhat like *wa* as in *dwad* (milk), by *wa*.

J. L. Kaul

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CORRIGENDA

Page 10, line 24, for *seven* read *six*

" " " 25, delete *16*

" 97, lines 1-2, for *predicate* read *subject*

" 142, top, add: "And should he come to me, I will"

" 144, " " "yaaru'su'nde daadi do'dmut dil bahaaras kyaah kare"

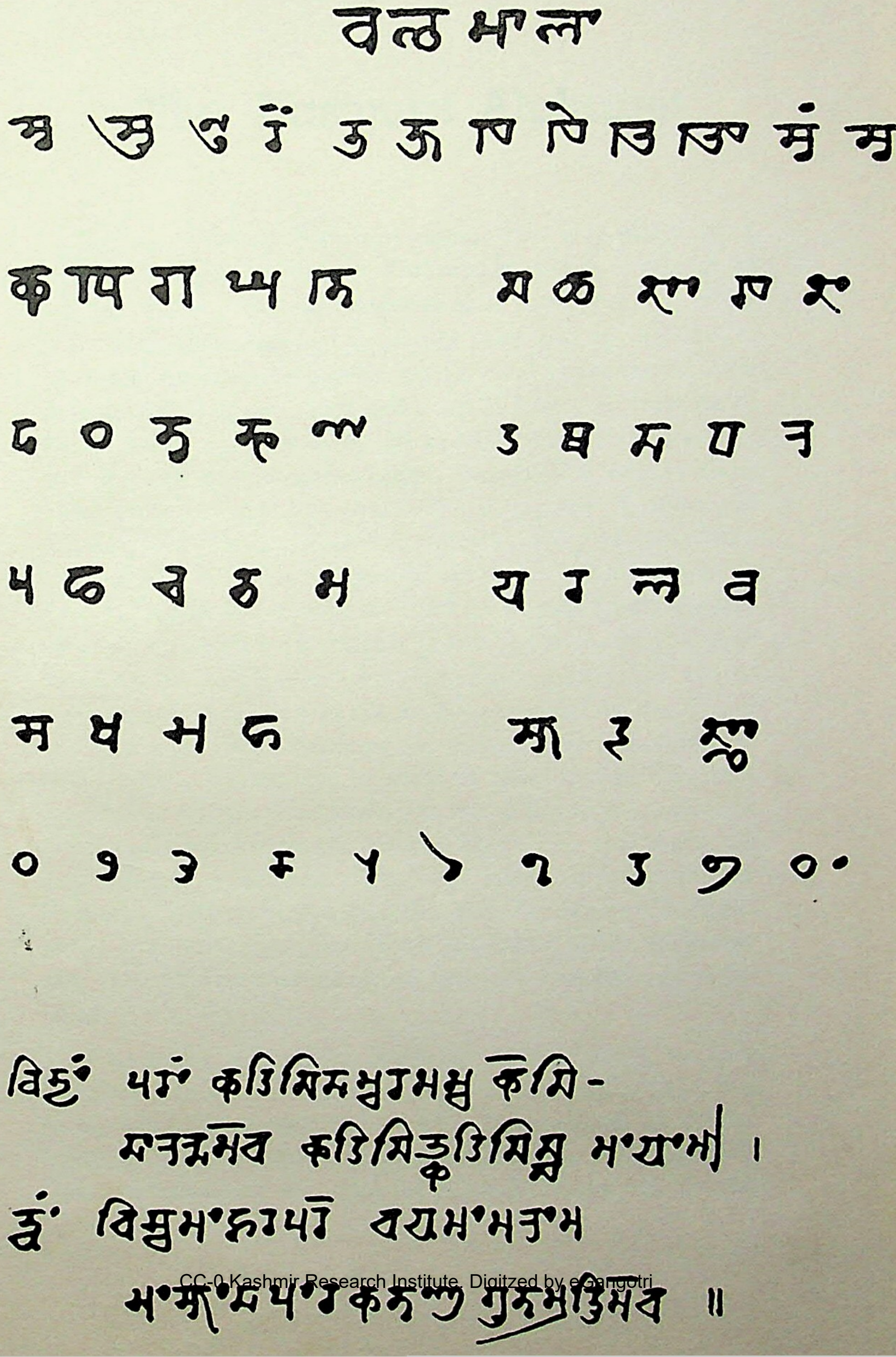
" 151, last line, read: "and thus we devoured the devouring time."

" 169, line 24, read: "You wretch," says she, "answer the kotwal's call."

" 289, " 18, for *1912* read *1911*

" 311, " 29, after "(Lakchi's Mole)" read "by Nadim or Santosh's own poem, *Vyas myaa'ny Nooraah.*"

SHARADA ALPHABET



The Kashmiri Alphabet

I

DO we have a Kashmiri alphabet ? Has there been, ever in our history, Kashmiri in use as a subject for study either as language or as literature ? I think not. Had this been so, we should have had an alphabet of our own, no matter what the script would have been. We should, that is to say, have had a set of letters to indicate all the sounds of our language, the sounds of it which are common to other neighbouring Indian languages as well as those which are peculiar to it. It is wrong to say that *Sharada* was our script for Kashmiri, that it expressed, more or less adequately, all the sounds of Kashmiri alphabet. *Sharada* was indeed our script but it was our script for writing Sanskrit which we now, very rightly, transcribe in the Nagari script. Nor was Perso-Arabic script ever adapted to Kashmiri so as to enable it to express, more or less adequately, the sounds peculiar to our language. We have some old manuscripts of Kashmiri in these scripts, but though in some of them a few indicators have been employed according to the whim of the writer or the copyist, yet we cannot say that there has ever been, till very recently, a serious attempt to adapt these scripts to Kashmiri. That we pronounced Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic as some of us still pronounce Hindi and Urdu, in the Kashmiri way, is a different matter altogether, and does not prove the point.

Kashmiri shared the handicap of not having its own alphabet with several other languages which, not long ago, had no alphabet of their own but which adapted one of the prevalent alphabets, introducing several unavoidable new signs or letters to indicate sounds peculiar to them. Thus was Roman

alphabet adapted to Turkish, Indonesian and Malay and Perso-Arabic to Pushto and Sindhi. Arabic, we know, does not have the letters which must be there to denote sounds peculiar to Persian like پ, چ, ژ, گ, or the Hindi-Hindustani sounds like these and ٹ, ڈ, and ڑ; but the urgency of need made it inevitable for Arabic script to be so enlarged as to include these, then newly invented, letter-symbols several centuries before it was further enlarged to include some more letter-symbols to express sounds peculiar to Sindhi and Pushto like ح with four dots instead of three inside it to denote the same sound as we have in the first letter of Kashmiri word 'tsar', च़र, ژر (a bug). This was as inevitable for Arabic script to do as for the Roman alphabet which most of us know only as the English alphabet but which also contains other signs and letter-symbols to be able to express sounds peculiar to French, German, and some other languages. So far as I know no such attempt has been made to enlarge the Nagari script to enable it to express sounds peculiar to other Indian languages, notably Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam, even Bengali, Gujarati, Oriya and Sindhi.*

It must, however, be conceded that while Perso-Arabic script was enlarged to contain signs and letters for sounds other than those it needed only for Arabic and Persian, the process was not complete nor phonetically accurate. It was not, for instance, made phonetically accurate so as to express adequately all Hindi-Hindustani sounds. But scripts need not follow logic any more than languages do. We know how arbitrarily Roman alphabet is used for the English language resulting in what appears to us to be a very erratic and illogical pronunciation. But we know also that the English alphabet does not include the signs and letters that, in the Roman

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*It is only recently that the Central Hindi Directorate, Ministry of Education, Government of India, has issued "Standard Devanagari Script."

alphabet, are used to denote sounds peculiar to languages other than English. This, however, continues to be done with the Arabic alphabet so that when one is writing Persian or Urdu one has to write Arabic words or words of Arabic origin as they are written in Arabic, using the very same spelling, though one may not pronunce them in the Arab way. One result of this is inevitably to make the spelling of languages using Perso-Arabic script derivative and therefore difficult. For one who dose not know Persian and, better still, Arabic also, writing of Urdu becoms difficult for this reason. This is so with Kashmiri written in this script where, for example, we have to write خط, نظر, اثر, حق, صف, خلعت, قطره not to name 'sacred' words or proper nouns. This is so also with the Nagari script though not to the same extent not because there are a larger number of words derived from Arabic and Persian than from Sanskrit (this, as regards the basic vocabulary, is not true) but because most of the words derived from Sanskrit have been more intimately assimilated in our phonetic system e. g., श्रान (स्नान), न्यशतुर (नक्षत्र), न्यन्दूर (निद्रा), कुकिल (कोकिल), क्रूद (क्रोद्ध) न्यरमल (निर्मल). Nevertheless in this script we shall have to write भगवान. नारायण, धर्म, ध्यान, though I know that some advocates of this script for Kashmiri would not insist upon doing so. But this will not, and surely need not, be so if we write Kashmiri in the Roman alphabet where we shall write these words thus : (a) of Arabic or Persian origin—*khat*, *nazar*, *asar*, *hakh*, *saph*, *khalath*, *katra* and (b) of Sanskrit origin—*bagavaan*, *naraayan*, *daᵊram*, *dyaan*. In Perso-Arabic alphabet the spelling will be derivative ; in Roman alphabet, phonetic.

II

I am not here pleading for adapting Roman alphabet for Kashmiri as more scientific and otherwise more suitable than Perso-Arabic or even Nagari scripts though this, in my considered opinion, is very true and for these reasons:

(a) It has one fixed definite letter for one fixed definite sound, and vice versa—an advantage it shares with the Nagari script.

(b) It has the additional advantage that it will have letter symbols to denote sounds and not mere diacritical marks as in Perso-Arabic script with its facile omission of vowel indicators (علامات) or even in the Nagari script in certain letter combinations e. g., اکھہ (one) but پکھہ (a wing), अख but पख, while in this script we shall write 'akh' and 'pakh' and the vowel *a* can neither be dropped nor mysteriously merged with the preceding consonant. For, Roman Kashmiri will neither be a consonantal script like Perso-Arabic nor a syllabic script like Nagari.

(c) There will be only as many letters to denote vowels and consonants as are needed in Kashmiri, making the Kashmiri alphabet a much shorter alphabet than it would be in Urdu script where all the letters denoting Perso-Arabic sounds have also to be included and where the many vowels and consonants peculiar to Kashmiri have to be added on to it ; or in the Nagari script even if it were simplified and shortened by removing all its vowels and consonants not necessary for Kashmiri.

(d) There would be an immense and incalculable advantage of printing and type-writing. Even if Kashmiri is written in the Naskh (and not the more familiar Nastaaliq) style of Perso-Arabic script, there must be at least three variants for each letter, its initial, medial, and end shapes ; but for Kashmiri in the Roman alphabet we need only one shape for each letter. We can dispense with capitalization, adopt only one script-hand form for both printing as well as writing, and not use punctuation marks like the semi-colon, the colon, inverted commas, brackets, and dashes. The type machines will be very simple and simply handled while they will have to be much more complicated for Perso-Arabic or

Nagari scripts with keys for vowel indicators above and below the letters.

(e) Its immense advantages notwithstanding, other languages find it difficult to adopt this script since tradition, long use and availability of considerable literature in their own scripts prevent them from doing so ; but these reasons cannot weigh with Kashmiri because there is neither tradition nor long use, nor any much literature available in Perso-Arabic or Nagari scripts. Except Professor S. K. Toshakhanı's *Women Welfare Trust School readers* and Pandit Zinda Kaul's *Paramananda*, both in Nagari script, all that has been published has been without any attempt being made to adapt the script used, chiefly Perso-Arabic, to express sounds peculiar to Kashmiri. I do not to refer to Kashmiri publications of Royal Asiatic Society, notably of Grierson, nor to my *Kashmiri Lyrics*, all of them using Roman alphabet with suitable changes and additions.

(f) Where, however, no such conderations carried weight, the Roman script was adapted, among others, by some Muslim countries themselves, Turkey, Indonesia and Malayasia.

III

My purpose here is to focus attention on a fact of supreme importance viz., firstly, that, whether the script adapted for Kashmiri be Nagari or Perso-Arabic or Roman (the only more or less known scripts here), we shall need to invent diacritical marks or letter-symbols to denote sounds peculiar to Kashmiri ; and, secondly, that, for Kashmiri, letter-symbols are very much better than mere diacritical marks.

Kashmiri is, what may rightly be called, a vowel language; it has not only many vowels but its vowel system is intricate. It has semi-vowels and shades of vowel sounds ; and it differs from other Indian languages in having silent or nearly silent vowels (called *matras* by Hindu Grammarians) which may

modify the pronunciation of the preceeding vowel, as in 'khos' खोस (a cup) but 'khaasy' खास्य् (cups) ; 'guru' गुरु (a horse), 'gurů' गुरु् (a mare), 'gury' गुर्य (horses) but not in 'guri' गुरि (mares) where the end vowel is more distinctly pronounced. In his Dictionary of the Kashmiri Language, Sir George A. Grierson lists as many as 30 vowels, quite a few of which are only medial, never initial. In framing a practical Kashmiri alphabet we need not, however, be very pedantic. We can leave some of these subtleties to the context as, for example,

asi o'n gur (we bought the horse),
asi an'y gur (we bought the mare).

Nevertheless Kashmiri has an intricate vowel system and cannot afford to drop or omit vowel marks as is very easily done in Perso-Arabic characters. There it does not very much matter for there are only *zabar*, *zer*, and *pesh* to pronounce ; and it is comparatively easy to conjecture which of these three would make sense, nor need we include جزم (jazm), تنوین (*tanveen*). and تشدید (*tashdeed*). Where however, there are two more variants each of these three alone, six in all, it is well-nigh impossible to have a conjectural or a guess script. The vowels cannot be dropped and it becomes necessary to invent letters, not merely marks, to denote these extra vowel sounds. But Perso-Arabic will not or cannot accept letter symbol for them because it is a consonantal script Arabic alphabet distinguishes between letters ساکن and متحرک or صحیح and علت not between vowels and consonants, as such, as Nagari does, which is not only phonetic, but also phonetically arranged. This leads some of us to the wrong conclusion that consonants alone can be indicated by letters, not vowels which, according to them, can, and therefore should, only be denoted by indicators or حرکات as *zabar*, *zer* and *pesh*, which are not, and therefore should not be, included in the alphabet chart of any language which adapts Perso-Arabic characters. This, obviously, is a wrong conclusion for two

good reasons ; First, that as a matter of fact, in Urdu, for instance, the sounds denoted by او in اور and چور ; اُو in اون and طول; ے in کھیل and ی in جھیل and پانی are vowel sounds and not consonant sounds as those of و in وقت or of ے in یاد. Secondly, it may be a strong sentiment that retains all the letters of the original Arabic alphabet even though some at least of its letters are not needed and do not express any sounds of the language which adapts the Arabic alphabet for its own use, it is a linguistic superfluity. If Kashmiri were to adapt the Roman script there seems to be no reason why it should retain the English spelling of the words it borrows from that language but certainly does not pronounce in the English way. For example : we shall not write *switch* but *suc* सुच سچ, not *cigerette* but *sigreth* सिग्रेठ سگر یتّھ. That is why the Turkish and the Indonesian alphabets do not retain the letters which they do not need and the sounds of which are foreign to them.

1. Here is the Turkish alphabet :

a, b, c (ج ज), ç (چ च), d, e, f, g, ğ (غ), h (ه. ح, خ) , i, I, j (ژ), k, l, m, n, o, ö, p, r, s, ş (ش), t, u, ü, v, y, z.

We can see that it has dropped *q* and *x* which it did not need, and added some letters, modified forms of the already existing ones, to express sounds peculiar to it to which it has given phonetic values according to its convenience.

2. The Indonesian alphabet :

a, b, d, dj (ج, ज), e, ĕ, g, h, i, j (य, ے), k, l, m, n, o, ng (ङ), nj (ञ), o, oe, p, r, s, sj (श ش), t, tj (च, چ), w.

This alphabet has also omitted some letters which it does not need, and adopted some others, even combinations of two

letters, digraphs, to denote its own sounds.

There should, therefore, be no reason why we may not look to our own convenience consistently with the linguistic and phonetic needs of our language. But can we do so if we adopt Perso-Arabic or even Nagari alphabet ? Not at all, if we adopt Perso-Arabic script and not wholly even for Nagari The Arabic-script of 28 letters became Perso.Arabic of 32 letters to express Persian language since it had to retain all the Arabic letters and to add چ, ژ, پ, and گ to them though, strictly speaking, it had no need of several of Arabic letters like ح, خ, and ذ; and the Perso-Arabic alphabet, by the same process, became the Urdu alphabet of 35 letters, adding ٹ, ڑ, and ڈ to itself. Of course the Urdu alphabet does not, phonetically speaking, comprise only 35 letters. There is not only یائے معروف as in کھیرا but also یائے مجہول as in مبرا and یائے موقوف as in جئے; there is also دو چشم ھ employed not at all in Persian but in Urdu to denote aspirates and other sounds not indicated by the Perso-Arabic alphabet ; and there is the very complicated problem of changing shapes of all these letters according as they are initial, medial, or end letters of a word as, for instance, of the letter ' ہ ' in ہمیشہ سہینہ and وعدہ.

But that as it may, all this need not mean that Perso-Arabic alphabet cannot be adopted for Kashmiri but that we must recognize, firstly, that, on all scientific and utilitarian considerations, the Roman alphabet is the best to adopt and Nagari the second best ; and, secondly, that if there are other outweighing considerations albeit non-linguistic (as I believe there are) in favour of Perso-Arabic alphabet, then we should not hesitate, wherever necessary, to introduce new symbols ; and, thirdly, that these new symbols, so far as can be, should be letters rather than mere indicators. There is, after all, nothing sacrosanct about a script and Arabic scholars know the

several forms through which the Arabic alphabet has evolved in Naskh and Nastaliq styles.

This is what the 1948 Kashmiri Script Committee did, and when the script was again put before the Committees of 1953 and 1955, they could not resile far from this basic position. The outweighing considerations in favour of Arabic script may not be scientific but sentimental ; nonetheless they are there and they are, at present, supreme. That is why, nearly twenty years ago, I made an attempt to adopt this very script in Nastaliq style to Kashmiri and introduced, for the first time, a Kashmiri section in the S. P. College Magazine, *the Pratap*, which continued till it was replaced by Professor S. K. Toshakhani's short-lived Kashmiri in International Roman alphabet.

IV

What. then, is the Kashmiri alphabet ? Following, for convenience of clearness only, the phonetic order of Nagari alphabet, we may arrange the Kashmiri alphabet as follows to indicate the lacunae that will have to be filled whatever the alphabet, Roman, Nagari or Perso-Arabic :—

Vowels

short	*long*
1. a, अ, اَ	2. ā *or* aa, आ, آ
3. a' (somewhat like *oe*) as in a'ch (an eye), la'r (a house)	4. aa' (somewhat like oe:) as in aa'r (a greengage), laa'r (a cucumber).
5. u' (somewhat like ui) as in tu'r (a rag).	6. uu' (somewhat like ui:) as in tuu'r (cold)
7. i, इ, اِ	8. ī, ई, اِی
9. u, उ, اُ	10. ū, ऊ, اُو

11. e' as in tre' (three), me' (me). 12 e, ए, اے
13. o' as in o'n (blind), go'n (dense) 14. o, ओ, او
15. ŏ (somewhat like wa, -व, उ+अ, as *ua* in quarrel)
e. g., dŏd, dwad, द्वद (milk)
16. ĕ (somewhat like *ya*, -य, इ+अ, as *e* in zest)
e. g., zev, zyav ज्यव (tongue)
17. -y (a shade of *i*, -य् at the end of a syllable preceded by a consonant) e. g., kuly, कुल्य् (trees).

Consonants

1. k क ک, 2. kh ख کھ 3. g ग گ 4. ṅ ङ ں,
5. ts (tsam=skin) च़, 6. tsh (tshal=trick) छ़,
7. z ज़ ز
8. c च چ 9. ch छ چھ 10. j ज
11. ṭ, ट ٹ 12. ṭh ठ ٹھ 13. ḍ ड ڈ
14. t त ت 15. th थ تھ 16. d द د 17. n न ن
18. p प پ 19. ph फ پھ 20. b ब ب 21. m म م
22. *y* [*you*] य ی 23. r र ر, 24. l ल ل 25. v व و
26. sh श ش 27. s स س 28. h ह ہ

Seventeen vowels and twenty-eight consonants. It is clear that for Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic alphabet we need new signs or letters for nine vowels (numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17 above) and two consonants (numbers 5 and 6 above); and for Kashmiri in Nagari we need seven vowels (numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13, 16) and three consonants (numbers 5. 6, and 7) which, however, are already prevalent particularly ज़ for ز and Z. What about Kashmiri in Roman alphabet? Roman alphabet must not, however, be confused with the sound values given to its letters in English. If we do not confuse the two, we need nine vowels, the same as for Perso-

Arabic and three consonants (numbers 4, 5 and 6), for though *n* in *ng* will do for many Kashmiri words where *n* and g sounds come together as in *tang* (تنگ तंग narrow) yet in some others we need a separate symbol to indicate the nasalisation of the vowel as in *panch* (پنڇھ पंछ) and *paantsh* (five) or dan (ڈان डाँ). I have not given the Perso-Arabic and Nagari letters for these Kashmiri sounds because though they have been invented and are, to an extent, in use, matrices have not been prepared for them.

Attempts have been made to supply these Kashmiri letters from some of the letter symbols used in the International phonetic system. Professor Toshakhani has used these symbols for the letters numbered above as follows :

Vowels

3. 3, 3ch (an eye), l3r (a house)
5. ə, tər a rag
11. ɛ, shɛ (six)
13. o, nor (a sleeve)
15. ya, zyav (tongue)
16. ɔ, dɔd (milk)
17. ʹ, an accent mark at the end of a syllable as in kh3:sʹ (cups).

The long sounds would be denoted by two (:) dots or other letters as follows :-

2. a:, a:kh (a scar)
4. 3:, 3:s (mouth), l3:r (a cucumber)
6. ə:, tə:r . cold)
8. i:, ti:l (oil)
10. u:, ku:n (a corner)
12. e, as in 12 above
14. o:, bo:r (a load) ;

Consonants

4. ~*or* ṅ (da:~ =bellow); 5. ts (tsar=a bug); 6. tsh (tshal=a trick); .1. ṭ (tang= a pear, kaṭh=a sheep) ; 2. ḍ (ḍab=a balcony)

The International phonetic script is, and rightly so, used for very highly scientific purposes ; but for common use the alphabet is not, and need not be, used in this strict phonetic form. Turkish and Indonesian, Philipino and Malay, have not adopted it in preference to the common Roman alphabet. If we too adopt Roman for Kashmiri, we shall not need to introduce any unfamiliar letters or signs to denote the sounds peculiarly Kashmiri ; and shall not therefore have to manufacture new matrices for new letters. Nor even need it be necessary for us to use indicators or diacritical marks on the top or below to Roman letters to denote other sounds as is often done in writing Urdu or Hindi in Roman alphabet or as I have done in my *Kashmiri Lyrics* to denote Kashmiri sounds shown above in the chart. They make for complexity ; new matrices have to be manufactured ; and the type writing machine becomes cumbersome since it has either to have all these additional letters or a silent key to put marks like a tilde (~), a macron(—), a micron (U),or a circumflex(^) or a dot above or below the letters. Moreover, these marks will be dropped in writing. Letter symbols will always be preferable to such signs, particularly in a script for a vowel language like Kashmiri. It would be easier and better to print Kashmiri in Roman characters without any capped or dotted letters which except the apostrophe or the accent mark most printing presses do not have or, having, cannot or will not set in type.

VI

It is, however, not necessary to keep to the phonetic order of letters as in Nagari. In Perso-Arabic Kashmiri we can fol-

low the order of the same alphabet placing the new letters next to the ones alike in shape and leaving the signs (علامات) to be taught along with *zabar*, *zer* and *pesh*, which are not shown in the alphabet chart at all ; and in the Roman we can follow the order of the alphabet as in English adding the new letters where they can appropriately be placed.

For convenience of writing, typing, and even printing, we may then use digraphs for the sounds peculiar to Kashmiri. We could rightaway start typewriting Kashmiri and, of course, printing it in monotype and linotype. Here is a possible chart of Roman Kashmiri.

1. a, akh (one), khar (donkey),
2. a: or aa, a:kh or aakh (a scar), kha:r or khaar (a smith),
3. a', a'ch (an eye), la'r (a house),
4. aa' or a':, aa's or a':s (mouth), laa'r or la':r (a cucumber).
5. b, bar (a door) ; a:b or aab (water), ba:r or baar (a load),
6. c, camci (a spoon),
7. ch, chal (a chunk), lach (a lakh),
8. d, dag (pain), kad (size),
9. d', d'ab (a balcony), yad', (stomach),
10. e', she' (six),
11. e, yer (wool), rel (railway train),
12. g, gur (a horse), ag (a knot in a board),
13. h, har (a quarrel), kaah (eleven),
14. i, pin (a pin), lanji (branches),
15. i: *or* ee ti:l or teel (oil), or shi:n, sheen (snow),
16. j, jab (a flock of sheep), baaj (tribute or a levy).
17. k, kan (an ear), pakun (to walk),
18. kh, khan (a weir), pakh (a wing),
19. l, lab (a wall), pal (a boulder),
20. m, mas (hair, wine), nam (nail, stern),
21. n, nas (nose), mangun (to ask, to beg), man (mind),
22. n', d'aan' (bellow), gaan'gal (disturbance),
23. o', o'n (blind), so'n (deep),
24. ol (nest), lol (love),

25. p, pan (thread), napanapa (glitter),
26. ph, phal (fruit), taph (fever),
27. r, rab (mud), aar (pity),
28. s, sar (a lake), ras (gravy, taste),
29. sh, shur (a child), posh (a flower),
30. t, tang (narrow, tight), to't (hot),
31. th, tham (a pillar), hath (a hundred),
32. t', t'ang (a pear), ho't' (throat),
33. th, t'haan (a lid), kat'h (sheep),
34. tsar, (a bug), matsar (madness),
35. tsh, tshath (a draught), o'tsh (fragile),
36. u, kun (single), gand'un (to bind),
37. u: *or* oo, ku:n or koon (a corner),
38. u', tu'r (a rag), gu'th (a swift current), tsu'ran (a crack),
39. u': *or* uu', tu':r (cold), tsuu'n (powder),
40. v, var (twist), dav (race), pav (path),
41. wa, dwad (milk), kwang (saffron),
42. y, yer (wool), yakh (ice), vay (foodgrains),
43. ya, dyal (rind), zyav (tongue),
44. y, shury (children), kuly (trees), ka'ny (a stone), khaa'sy (cups)
45. z, zoon (moon), vuz (doorway).

Here we may note the following points :

1. A colon mark (:) after a vowel denotes the long sound of it e. g., no's 2, 3, 4, 15, 37, and 39, above.
2. Kashmiri has no aspirated sonants *gh*, *jh*, *d'h*, *dh*, or *bh*.
3. Kashmiri possesses fricatives *ts* (च़), *tsh* (छ़), and *z* (ज़) which the Nagari alphabet, as such, does not have.
4. The letter *h* is used to denote aspirates *ch*, *kh*, *ph*, *th*, and *t'h*, and the Sibilant *sh*, which is not an aspirate of *s*.
5. Letters *f*, *q*, and *x* are omitted as not representing any Kashmiri sound.
6. The accepted symbol for ع in the Romanization of

the Arabic script, that is, an inverted comma upside down (') is not used because the Arabic *ain* is always dropped in words borrowed by Kashmiri, even though it may be retained in writing when the Perso-Arabic script is employed. This is so also with ث, خ, ح, ژ, ص, ض, ط, ظ, غ, ف, ق.

7. *d'* (ड), *t'* (ट) are indicated by an apostrophe mark. So also are the short vowels *e'* and *o'* of the long *e* and *o* respectively, while the nasalisation of *n* is indicated by the minute mark ′ (no. 22 above) wherever necessary.

8. *u'* at the end of a syllable and more so at the end of a word would usually be indicated by simple *a*, when it is not clearly accented and is only an obscure shade of the sound e. g., *dazadaza*, (envious hatred) *dubaara* (again), *panjira* (a cage) or even in *gara* (home).

9. The other sounds peculiar to Kashmiri are indicated by digraphs *wa* and *ya* or-*y* (at the end of a syllable preceded y a consonant).

10. We may or may not have capital forms of letters. I would prefer not to have them even for proper nouns or to begin a line of verse. We can easily be guided by the context in the very rare instances where we may suspect confusion e. g.,

    baagas draayi *gula* (a particular herb)
    gula (a proper noun) aav gara.

11. Similarly, we may adopt only comma and full stop as marks of punctuation, and not employ quotation, interrogation or exclamation and other rhetorical marks. I would not have them except perhaps the quotation marks, only the double inverted commas, and sometimes the mark of interrogation.

12. The letters *ts* should be treated as a single letter, representing the fricative sound of *c*, Nagari च and Perso-Arabic چ, which is very common in Kashmiri and its aspirated form is *tsh*, again a single letter sounded as *ts*+*h*, not *t*+*sh*. It is to be distinguished from the Sanskrit conjoint त्स, which is a different sound altogether.

These are 45 letters in all, out of which the forms of letters to learn are only 23, eliminating letters formed by the apostrophe or the minute mark or digraphs.

I must here gratefully acknowledge that in devising these symbols I have had the benefit of discussing the various alternatives with several friends among whom I should like to mention Professor P. N. Pushp. I have also had very valuable consultation with my friend, the eminent philologist and linguist, Padma Vibhushan Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji. He would, however, not countenance the unscientific use of *ee* and *oo* as the long sounds of *i* and *u* respectively nor of *ya* for the sound as *e* in the English word 'bed'. I have mentioned them as alternative symbols for *i*: and *u*: because, being familiar with forms like *ee* and *oo*, the English-knowing persons find it easy to follow them and also because the use of *ii* and *uu* as the long sounds of *i* and *u* respectively would look confused. For the same reason I have not employed *e* and *o* as the short vowel forms and *ee* and *oo* respectively as their long sounds. And I wished to avoid indicators like a macron to denote long forms of *i* and *u* as also of *a*, *e* and *o*.

This is how it will read and look in print. The illustration is the first stanza of a well-known poem entitled *Majbu:riya:h* by Zinda Kaul :

vadihe manush ce'yihe na o'sh
vadanas vuchun ta':si:r kya:h
ha':rith a'chiv kiny khu:n kya:h

cha':vith palan su':ty hi:r kya:h
bu:zith zi boza:n chum na ka:nh
ph'ry-ya:d karnu'c zi:r kya:h
la':yith nabas yim ti:r kya:h
majbu:riya:h, laacaa'riya:h

Or, if we use *ee* and *oo* as the long vowels of *i* and *u* respectively,

vadihe manush ce'yihe na o'sh
vadanas vuchun taa'seer kyaah
haa'rith a'chiv kiny khoon kyaah
chaa'vith palan suu'ty heer kyaah
boozith zi bozaan chum na kaanh
pha'ry-yaad karnu'c zeer kyaah
laa'yith nabas yim teer kyaah
majbooriyaah, laacaa'riyaah.

Translated into English, it means,

Man would weep,
he would not gulp down his tears ;
but what availed it him to shed his tears ?
What availed it him to drop blood from his eyes ?
What availed it him to beat his head against the rock ?
Knowing that none heeds him,
What drives him on still to sue for help ?
What drives him on to shoot his darts at the void ?

What compulsion ! What helplessness !

VII

The Nagari alphabet has the merit of being phonetic, using fixed definite signs for fixed definite sounds, and is suitable for Kashmiri which, as already pointed out, has an intricate vowel system. Moreover, for Kashmiri in the Nagari script the new symbols for vowels and for consonants which

have to be devised can be easily devised, the latter by placing a dot beneath the three letters, as च़ छ़ and ज़; which are already in use. And eight vowels of the Nagari, ऐं, औ, अं अः, लृ, लॄ, ऋ, ॠ, eight of its consonants (five aspirates घ, झ, ढ, ध, भ, two nasals ञ, ण, and one sibilant ष,) can be eliminated, simplifying the alphabet into 14 vowels and 26 consonants, including the letters which have to be devised to express sounds peculiar to Kashmiri. The spelling for Kashmiri in Nagari will be phonetic, not at any rate as derivative as for Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic script.

The vowels and consonants peculiar to Kashmiri may be listed below :

Vowels

अ, अछ़ (an eye), लर (a house)

आ, आर (a greengage), लार (a cucumber)

इ़, ति़र or, उ, तुर, (a rag)

ई़, ती़र or ऊ, तुर (cold)

ऐँ, त्रेँ or ए', त्रे' or ए़, त्रे़ (three)

ओँ, ओँन or ओ़, ओ़न (blind)

-य ज्यव (tongue), ग्यव (ghee)

-व, द्वद (milk), कङ्ग (saffron)

-य़, खास्य़ (cups), कुल्य़ (trees)

Consonants

च़, च़ूर (a thief); छ़, छ़ठ (a draught); ज़ून (moon)

Here is the stanza transliterated into modified Nagari :-

वदिहे मनुश च्ययिहे न ओ़श

वदनस वुछुन तासीर क्याह

हारिथ अछिव किन्य खून क्याह

छ़ाविथ पलन सी्त हीर क्याह
बूज़िथ ज़ि बोज़ान छुम न कांह
फर्ययाद करर्निच ज़ीर क्याह
लायिथ नबस यिम तीर क्याह
मजबूरियाह, लाचारियाह

I have discussed the Kashmiri script in Roman and Nagari characters not only more clearly to bring out the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri but also because it is time that, even in them, the Kashmiri alphabet were standardized for use in English and Hindi books and journals. I have not discussed the use and adoption of our own indigenous *Sharada* characters, because they are already fallen into disuse even for Sanskrit for want of type and very few, even among the Kashmiri Pandits, are familiar with it. I am, however, giving the *Sharada* script with its corresponding Nagari characters and an illustration from a manuscript written in *Sharada* elsewhere in the book.

VIII

Perso-Arabic characters are not phonetically as suitable for Kashmiri as Nagari characters (the Roman are undoubtedly the best), though they are simpler in shape and easily written, and take less time to write. That is why for Kashmiri in this script it becomes necessary, firstly, to standadize the shapes of letter symbols e. g., 'ه ' for all its variants ; secondly, to devise letters, not mere signs, for the vowel and consonant sounds peculiarly Kashmiri ; and thirdly, to prefer naskh to nastaliq style of printing and writing. Naskh is better able to indicate distinctly letter symbols in the confluent style of Perso-Arabic script which in nastaliq, usually written in the fluent *aamezi* (running) style, are apt to coalesce with the result that, often enough, in a vowel language like Kashmiri, they

become undecipherable. There is, besides, the advantage of the modern facility of printing. Nevertheless there is the impressive argument made by many people, notably by teachers, that since, and so long as, Urdu, our official and regional language, continues to be printed and written in nastaliq, Kashmiri also should be so printed and written. In my opinion stress need not be laid on the relative merits of naskh and nastaliq because, for quite sometime, much of our printing will, as a matter of fact, be lithographic and not typographic. And what is good for Urdu can be good enough for Kashmiri ; the printing may, for the present, be done mainly in lithographic nastaliq and, only for some jobs, in typographic naskh while we may write Kashmiri in nastaliq rather than in naskh which is less familiar to us. For Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic we shall have 35 letters of Urdu alphabet and symbols for nine new vowel and two new consonant sounds ; but they can be further reduced in accordance with the alphabet usage of this script by not including the indicators, حرکات *zabar*, *zer* and *pesh* and their Kashmiri variants, and by including but not counting the different forms of ' ہ ' and ' ھ ', ' ی ' and ' ے ' and their Kashmiri variants nor such signs as *jazm* جزم and *hamza* ہمزہ and their Kashmiri variants. Thus though we may write 45 letters in the Kashmiri alphabet, we shall count only 38. But, if we employ the persian ' ژ ' instead of ح with two dots (which I prefer) for our ' ts ' sound to be named " ts:m " चीम on the analogy of " ji:m ", we shall count only 37 letters in Kashmiri in Urdu alphabet.

There can, however, be no controversy about the fact that whatever the alphabet, whether Nagari or Perso-Arabic, the new letters or signs that are to be devised must be devised keeping in view the following considerations :

1) They should harmonize with the forms of the characters of the script chosen to be adapted.

2) They should not be ungainly or complicated in appearance or difficult to write so that the pen does not have to rest or change direction.

3) They should not cause confusion to those who learn either Hindi and Sanskrit, or Arabic, Persian and Urdu, as the case may be, that is, respectively, whether the script to be adopted is Nagari or Perso-Arabic. That is why, letters and signs in use in the script chosen to be adapted should not, as a rule, be used to express different sounds. For this reason some people do not like to impress into service 'ژ', *hamza alif*, or *jazm*; and though it may be admitted that 'ژ', is generally used for *ts* or च़ sound as in *tsar* ژر (a bug) and that there are very few words in Kashmiri with this Persian letter which could cause confusion, yet I would prefer "tsi:m", that is, ح with two dots inside it- For this reason also some do not prefer "و" with a bar below it to denote the *wa* sound peculiar to Kashmiri as in *kwang* (saffron), which is used in Persian words like خود and خوش and which as pronounced generally by Kashmiris, is very near the sound to be indicated.

4) And, without prejudice to these considerations but as of overriding importance, the letters and signs should be such that they indicate adequately the Kashmiri sounds so that Kashmiri can be written and read without difficulty and confusion.

IX

Among the attempts made to devise letters and signs for sounds peculiar to Kashmiri are (1) for Kashmiri in Nagari script those of Prof Toshakhani and, very recently, of Shri Jialal Jalali and (2) for Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic script devised by Professor J. L. Kaul for use in *the Pratap*, the S. P. College Magazine, and more particularly, those recommended by the Government Committees for perfecting the Kashmiri script,

of 1948, 1952 and 1953. But, as regards Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic script, I should plead for

a) the retention of *tsi:m* चीम instead of ڗ; that is ح with two dots ;

b) the replacing of 'v' mark above ے (used to denote short quantity vowel sound of it as in '*tre*'=three) by the very common Persian and Urdu ~ which, without the sign of 'ט' below it, would denote this sound as in ~ ترٜ ;

c) the use of *hamza* with *alif* and other letters, above and below them to denote peculiar vowel sounds which may be named *hamza zabar* and *hamza zer* or *kaa'shir zabar* and *kaa'shir zer*. These are already somewhat familiar and, though in Arabic they make no sense, there is no reason why they should not be given a particular sound value in kashmiri where there should be no cause for confusion ;

d) the use of *jazm* or circumflex mark "∧" on a consonant to show that it is to be united with the following letter ; e g , ترام (copper) – بیول (seed), شراکھ and میون ;

e) the use of a hyphen (—) to indicate that the parts of words though written separately are really parts of the same word e. g., کالی - کیتھ, مانی - متی, سیری - یس, امی - سی

(kaa'ly-kyath, maa'ny-mu'ty, siry·yas, a'my-su'y) ;

f) more phonetic than derivative spelling. In Persian and Urdu we have certain patterns of writing of some words and their forms e g., گل , لالہ, ملال which in Kashmiri, however, we pronounce with a slight vowel sound at the end, and the ل of ملال is not ساکن and it is pronounced with the same slight vowel sound with which the لہ of لالہ is pronounced. Phonetically therefore both would be written alike with a Kashmiri *zer* under the last letter. But this transcription may not be germane to Persian and Urdu but the Perso-Urdu

knowing Kashmiri would not have it in the phonetic forms but as گلاله and ملاله. Not only this. As regards the spelling of words also, he would have us write in their original spelling not only (1) 'sacred' words like خدا, کریم, قران. اله, وعظ, and (2) words of Perso-Arabic origin which we have adopted with only a slightly different pronounciation like خط, خاص, غم, نظر, صاف, فولاد, but also (3) words which we pronounce very differently, e. g., میدان, قیمت, قید. کاریگر, فیص, طغیانی, عیش; and

g) preservation in use of numerous Kashmiri words which, in our poetry, have gathered nuances of meaning and significance, but which are being discarded as archaic in favour of Perso-Arabic words, though they are in current use not only in our villages and Muslim homes but also in the towns and city of Srinagar e. g., *mwal* for *qimat* ; vaan's for '*umr*' ; *gobur* for *farzand* ; *pathar* (pyav) for *zaminas* (pyat'h pyav). We would have them all, assimilating all foreign words to our phonetics and grammar and enriching our sweet mother tongue with synonyms and antonyms.

If this is not accepted, as I am afraid it will not be, Kashmiri will be made to conform even to the grammar of Persian and. sometimes after, our spelling will not correspond at all to our pronunciation. This the orthodox Arabic and Persian knowing people may not regard as a linguistic calamity as some of us do ; indeed some of them when they write Kashmiri, prefer using خ for کھ and ف for پھ e. g., اختابه, خانذر, فل, فمب, عدس بدل, خجر و, فرن which is totally unjustifiable.

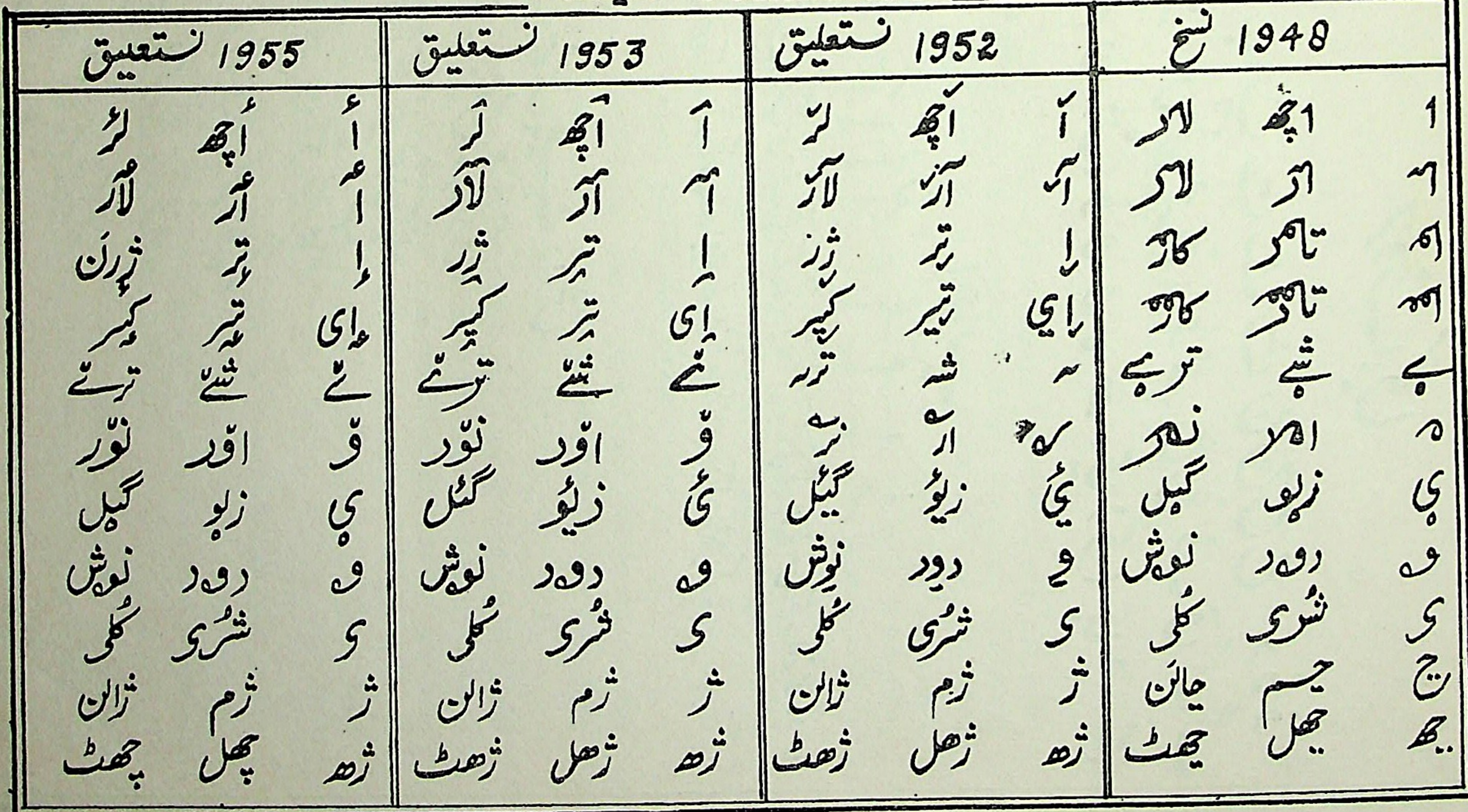
X (Postscript)

The Committee, consisting of the late Mr. G. A. Ashai, Prof. S. K. Toshakhani, Prof. J. L. Kaul and G. H. Beg Arif, set up by the Kashmir Government in 1948 to perfect the

Kashmiri script adopting the Perso-Arabic alphabet, recommended for it the Naskh style with the addition of a few letter symbols to indicate the phonems peculiar to Kashmiri. Their recommendations were accepted by the then Government. In 1952, however, another Committee was nominated by the Government to consider certain complaints and criticisms regarding the use of the naskh - style Kashmiri made, notably, by the teachers of schools. The Committee prepared the report recommending a change over to the Nastaliq style recommending other letter symbols and diacritical marks siuted to this style rather than to the naskh style. But before the report was formally presented, there was a change of Government on 9th August, 1953, and the new Government appointed another Committee, a larger one, in 1953, which also agreed with the change over to nastaliq but recommended a set of different letter symbols and diacritical marks for it. It was finally in 1955 that the Government set up a Committee, with Mr. T.N. Khazanchi as the Secretary, to consider all the reports and reconsider and review the recommendations made in them. The Government approved the recommendations of the Committee, and in accordance with them finally approved the new symbols to indicate the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri which are now in use.

The accompanying chart gives at a glance these Kashmiri phonems, nine vowels and two consonants, as recommended by the several Committees, including those by the 1955 Committee. The illustrative stanza in the finally approved script of 1955 Committee is also given therein.

The chart of phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri as recommended by the Script Committees



حروف تہجی

ا ب پ ت ٹ ث ج چ ح خ د ڈ ذ

ر ڑ ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ک گ

ل م ن (ں) ۆ و ٶ ہ ھ ي (ی) ۑ (ۓ)

یے

اعراب

اَ اِ اُ آ اٗ اٖ اٚ اۍ اٟ

نوٹ :- جب کسی حرف تہجی کے اُوپر (ہ) کی نشانی لگی ہو تو اُس کے ساتھ کا دوسرا حرف اُس کے ساتھ مِلا کر پڑھا جائے۔ مثلاً :- ترٛام۔ دٛراو۔ ثرٛاکھ۔

وَدِہے مُنش چیٚنہے نہ اوش

وَدنس وُچھُن تاٲثیر کیاہ

ہٲرتھ اُچھو کنِہ خوٗن کیاہ

چھاوِتھ پلَن ستی ہیر کیاہ

بُوزِتھ زہ بوزان چھُم نہ کانْہہ

فرٛی۔ یاد کرٕنچ زیٖر کیاہ

لاٲیتھ نبس یم تیرِ کیاہ

مجبوُر یاہ، لاچاریاہ

Kashmiri Poetry

I

EXCEPTING the present period from 1947 onwards, Kashmiri literature divides itself into four main periods. Literary movements do not, however, blaze forth or fade out all on a sudden. They go on not only when revolt against a particular tradition is brewing, but also even after it has succeeded in overthrowing it. Literary movements really dovetail one into another. Therefore I mean nothing more by this datewise division (and others could perhaps be suggested) than a division of convenience for dealing with the subject in historical perspective. These period-wise divisions are :

I. Upto 1555, when Sultan Habib Shah, last of the Sultans of Kashmir and of Shah Mir dynasty was dethroned, and Ghazi Chak ascended the throne.

II. 1555 to 1752, that is, from the coming of the Chaks to the time when Ahmad Shah Durrani conquered Kashmir, and ended the Moghal rule which had followed the rule of Chaks.

III. 1752 to 1925—a long period—which can be divided into three sub-periods :

(a) 1752 to 1846, that is, from the coming of the Afghans to the coming of the Dogras, ending the short Sikh rule (1819—1846) which had followed the rule of the Afghans.

(b) 1846 to 1885, that is, the reign of the first two Dogra Maharajas, Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh.

(c) 1885 to 1925, the reign of Pratap Singh till his death.

IV. 1925 to 1947, from the death of Pratap Singh to the coming of Independence.

In the first period we have Shiti Kantha's *Mahaanay Prakaash*, Lal Dyad's and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali's *Waakh*, and Bhattaavataar's *Baanaasura Vaddha*. This is the period of the poetical form which we call *vaakh* (from Sanskrit *vakya*, word). A *vaakh* is mostly a 4-line stanza, complete and independent in itself, a sententious gnomic verse, mystical or didactic. Shithi Kantha's *Mahaanay Prakaash* has more linguistic and prosodic interest than literary; and its about 94 verses, each a 4-line stanza, deals with the practices of esoteric schools of the time. Here's an example :

इतयश्रोवल्लीन परम्पर
दीपमाला जन अन्धकार
घमित धाम उदयेत निरन्तर
दिशिशपायवतु अविकार ॥

(IX Udaya, 7th St.)

It has been noted by Sir George Grieson* that the language is old, and belongs to the period when Prakrit, in the Apabhramsa stage, had just merged into the language that finally became the Kashmiri of the present day. In the Kashmiri of today it would read :

yitshu'y avaliyan hu'nz paramparaa
duu'pmaalaa zan andu'kaaras
kaa'sith, 'daam' nyarantar vwadayas yith
avikaar vwapaayich vath d'eshana yiyi

The most famous name of the first period and indeed

* Memoirs : Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol XI, No. 2.

of all Kashmiri literature is that of Lal Dyad, Granny Lalla, as she has been affectionately called by the people of Kashmir. She was born about the middle of the fourteenth century in the time of Sultan Ala-ud-Din, the third Muslim king of Kashmir, who ascended the throne in 1347 A. D. This was the time of the early Muslim rule in Kashmir, when classical Sanskrit tradition of the Hindu period of Kashmir history had begun to decay, Hindu society was disintegrating and Sanskrit, which had never been the language of the masses, had lost the patronage of the feudal rajas and Government prestige. This had now come to be attached to Persian, the new court language. It was about this time. when the old literary tradition had lost its hold on society and the new had not yet gained it, that poetry found expression in the real language of the people. Yet Lal Dyad did not have a complete break with the past: she did weave new poetic patterns and imagery from the fabric of people's own idiom but she also continued the tradition of their indigenous philosophy, a system of Kashmiri monistic Saivism. For Lal Dyad is a mystic, and in many verses she gives hints of her Yogic S*adhana*, and discipline of breath. Speaking of her about five centuries later, another famous mystic-poet of Kashmir, Parmanand of Mattan, pays her a glowing tribute:

> "Lallesvari, unique in her practice of
> the *Yoga* of *Dvadashanta Mandala*,
> realizing *anahata, nadu, bindu*, and *Om* (stages in Yoga),
> attained to the Supreme Bliss of *Ananda*".

We know from her verses that she was upbraided by some and respected by others but neither praise nor blame seemed to affect her. Moving about in a thoroughly unconventional manner in a semi-nude state (her abdomen, *lal* in Kashmiri, hanging loose over her pubic region); eclectic in her sayings, and even critical of orthodoxy, its dogma and

ritual, and what's more, speaking of the secret doctrine and her experiences in a language which was neither Sanskrit nor Persian (the one having lost favour, the other not yet firmly established about the middle of the fourteenth century)—speaking in Kashmiri, the despicable native tongue of the lower classes, Lal Dyad's name does not occur in the Sanskrit histories which continued Kalhana's chronicle, those of Shrivara or, after him, of Shuka or of Praja Bhatta. It is, for the first time, in the *Twaarikh-i-Kashmir* by Khwaja Dyadamari (written about 1730 A. D. when her fame had become irresistable) that we find a mention of her :

عارفه کامله لله مجذوبه ظهورش در زمان سلطان
علاوالدین بود ... و همان اثنا او را جذبه الهی رو داده

We are here concerned with her *Vaakh* or sayings which have had a mighty hold on people's thought and affection, whether Hindu or Muslim, scholar or peasant, all alike. She continued the tradition of the indigenous Shaiva philosophy of Trika Monism, but gave expression to it not only in a popular form in which people could understand it but, much more significantly, in the real language of the people themselves. Perhaps, for the first time in the history of Kashmir were mystical truths and the disciplines relevant to their realization made available to the people, then mostly unlettered here as elsewhere in the world, in the language they spoke and not in Sanskrit which much fewer people could understand. It is however not the abstruse truths of philosophy nor the discipline of vital airs, of *Kundalini* and *Nada-Bindu* Yoga, that made her the poet-saint of the people. It is rather the intensity of conviction and faith, the stamp of genuine mystic experience, the authenticity of her poetic expression, and the energy of idiom and terse homely imagery, unsurpassed till the present day, that give her verse-sayings a lasting eminence both in the people's minds and in the literature of Kashmir. Her sayings have become current coin even in the speech

of today and retain freshness of appeal. In her verses we find a passionate apprehension of mystical truths which is the mark of a God-realized saint. There is little sentimental and didactic moralising which marks the sayings of less surer mystics. Moreover, she rebelled against hypocrisy, the outword observances of orthodox ritualism of the time and its exclusiveness. Let me illustrate:

1. deva vat'aa divur vat'aa
   pyat'ha bwana chuy yeeka vaat'h
   pooz kas karakh hot'ha bat'aa
   kar manas ta pavanas sangaat'h

2. naaba'dy-baaras at'a-gand' dyo'l gom
   dihi-kaad' ho'l gom hyaka kahyoo
   gwara-sund vanun raavan tyo'l pyom
   pahali-ro'st khyo'l gom hyaka kahyoo

3. aami pana so'dras naavi chas lamaan
   kati bozi day myon me'ti diyi taar
   aamyan t'aakyan pony zan shamaan
   zuv chum bramaan gara gatshahaa'

4. po't zooni wo'thith mo't bolanovum
   dag lalanaa'vu'm dayi-su'nzi prahe
   la'ly la'ly karaan laala vuzanovum
   meelith tas man shrotsyom dahe

5. Lal bo' loosu's tshaaraan ta gaaraan
   hal me' ko'rmas rasa-nishi ti
   vuchun hyo'tmas t'aad'y d'eet'hymas baran
   me' ti kal gane-yi zi zogmas ta'ty

6. she' wan tsat'ith shyashi-kal wuzu'm
   prakrath ha'nzum pavana suu'tee
   lolu'ki naara vaa'linj buzu'm
   Shankar lo'bum tamiy suu'tee

1. The idol and the temple are but stone,
stone they are and nothing more.
O wise Pandit, whom dost thou worship ?
Unite thy mind and breath in Him alone.
2. The candy-load upon my back has gone loose,
my body has bent double under the load, ah me !
My guru's word, like a blister, has pained my heart,
my flock shepherdless, is gone astray, ah me !
3. With a rope of untwisted thread I tow my boat,
would God heard my prayer and brougt me safe across !
Like water in cups of unbaked clay I waste away,
and I long to reach my home !
4. "When the moonlight ended with the dawn,
Mind of her self with illusion mad,
Lalla to the love of God had drawn.
Soothing the pain that had made her sad :
Cried to her Beloved : It is I,
Lalla, Lalla, that awakens Thee :
Buried in the crystal lake doth lie
All the defilement that darkened me"*
5. Searching and seeking Him I Lalla, wearied myself,
and even beyond my strength I strove ;
then, looking for Him, I found the doors closed and latched.
This deepened my longing and stiffened my resolve
and I would not move from where I was,
with love and longing, looking out for Him.
6. I cut my way through the six Forests,
and light shone forth from the Awakened Moon.
I controlled the vital airs and prakriti froze.
Then I parched my heart in the fire of love
and thus came to Shanker, the Supreme Self.

* Tr. by Sir Richard Temple.

We note, in these and other *vaakhs*, the variety of rhyme-schemes, *abab*, *abac*, *abcb*, or no rhyme at all. The metre is qualitative stress accent, four accents to each line generally, and not a strict short and long quantity measure.

A younger contemporary of Lal Dyad was the famous founder-saint of the Rishi Order of Kashmir, Sheikh Nur-ud-din Vali of Tsrar Sharif (1376-1438 A. D.), popularly known as Nund Rishi. There are several manuscripts entitted *Rishinama* or *Nurnama*, mainly dealing with the life and miracles and teaching of the Rishi in which are interspersed his verses but the genuineness of which it is difficult to ascertain in view of the different versions of them. In any critical edition of these *shrukh*, the discriminating editor will have to rely almost entirely on the "internal" evidence furnished by the *shrukh* themselves. Moreover, the authorship of several of them is disputed between him and Lal Dyad and even some others who came much later. This is so with the verse-sayings of Lal Dyad too ; for there are several, if not many, of Lal Dyad's *vaakh*, attributed to her by Sir A. George Grierson and others, which, from the " internal " evidence of the *vaakh* are surely not hers. After the lapse of two or three hundred years when the earliest *Nurnamas* were put in writing, not only must the language have undergone change but, quite probably, several of Lal Dyad's verses must have come to be attributed to Nund Rishi and vice versa. However that be, his *shrukh* are mostly didactic in content and exhortative in tone, in most of which he speaks of the transitoriness of life and its pleasures, and exhorts people to cultivate self-discipline and piety. They have undoubtedly enriched the language with wise saws and pithy sayings that have become proverbial. For instance :

1. aarabalan naagaraada rov
   saad rov tsooran manz

mood'agaran gwarapandith rov
raazahonza rov kaavan manz

2. babrilangas mushk no moore
hoony-basti kophoora neri na zaat
man bwadi gaarun ada no sore
na ta shaala tungay neree kyaat

3. poshinool poshivaariy gaaraan
mwəgul gaaraan huniy vaas
shaa'j shi:nyalay gaaraan
khar gaaraan guh lyad ta saas

4. kyaah kari dandaro'stuy d'oonis
kyaah kari a'nis teer kamaan
kyaah kari swanasund vastu'y hoonis
kyaah kari a'nis shilapadmaan

5 vyathavaavas tan na'nee su ti do'haa, Nasaro
to'n vu'gu'ru' ta sya'ny pa'nee su ti do'haa, Nasaro
nishi ra'ny ta vurni kha'nee su ti do'haa, Nasaro
vuru'bata ta gaad'aganee suti do'haa, Nasaro.

6. a'kis maa'lis maaji hu'nydyan
timan du'y traa'vith ta kyaay
musalmaanan kyaav hya'nydyan
kar bandan toshi khwadaay

1. Amid the rocks the fount was lost ;
among the thieves was lost the saint.
Among the ignorant the wise teacher was lost,
and the swan was lost among the crows.

2. The sweet basil will not lose its fragrance,
nor will a dog's hide give up its stench
even though with camphor washed.
Seek Him with all your mind and understanding,
otherwise, what avail your jackal cries ?

3. The oriole seeks out a flower garden ;
   the owl seeks out a deserted spot ;
   the she-jackal searches dreary wastes ;
   the donkey runs after dung and dirt.

4. What use are walnuts to a toothless man
   or a bow and arrow to the blind ?
   Can gold ornaments add lustre to a dog,
   or a lovely maiden to the blind ?

5. The body uncovered and exposed to the cold river winds blowing,
   thin porridge and half-boiled vegetable to eat—
   there was a day, O Nasaro !

   One's wife by the side and a warm blanket for cover,
   a sumptuous meal with spicy fish to eat—
   there was a day. O Nasaro !

6. No wonder, born of the same father and mother,
   we bear no ill-will to each other.
   Should our love bind us all alike, Hindu and Musalman,
   then surely God is pleased with us.

But Nund Rishi could be piercingly intense. e. g.,

7. a'shk chuy kun go'bur ma:ji marun
   swa zwala kari ta kihay
   a'shk chuy gunatulu'ryav byab baru'ny
   su swakha rozi ta kihay
   a'shk chuy tez kartaji tsanji darun
   su chwakh zari ta kihay

8. kunyaray bozakh kuni no rozakh
   a'my kuniran kota:h dyut jala:v
   akl ta phikir tor ko't sozakh
   ka'my ma:li cyath hyo'k su da'ry-ya:v

7. Love is death of an only son to a mother—
   can she have any sleep ?
   Love is venemous stings of a bosomful swarm of wasps—
   can the sufferer have any rest ?

Love is the piercing thrust of a sharp rapier—
can the victim bear the pain ?

8. Would you know what Oneness is ?
But *you* will cease to be.
For Oneness is all. Its splendour vast
has set all this aflame.
Would you know what Oneness is ?
But reason and thought will reach it not,
and who within his ken can bring the Infinite ?

Bhattaavataar's *Baanaasura Vaddha* (discovered in the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Poona) is, as the author tells us, based on the romance of Usha and Anirudha narrated in the *Harivamsha Purana ;* but we must await a properly edited publication of it before we can assess its linguistic worth and literary merit. It is the first secular poem that can be dated, having been written in the reign of Sultan Zainul-Abidin Badshah (1420—1470 A. D.) Here is a specimen :

जननि पाने विमले राज्ये षड्विंषे वर्षे कतकिय ।
दिव सरस्वत पूजेत ग्राज्ये हरिवंशस ग्रन्दर वंथिय ।।

The same must be said of Ganaka Prashasta's *sukha-dukhacaritam*, a Kashmiri didactic poem on the art of happy living, the manuscript of which, also discovered at Poona, is still not available to us. We have references to *Jaina Prakasha*, a play on Zain-ul-Abidin by Yodha Bhatta, and to *Jaina Carita*, a biography of the Sultan, by Nathasoma ; but these manuscripts have yet to be discovered. They are, however, enough to show that Kashmiri was being accepted by the learned and literary elite as a language worthy to be used for literary art-forms like drama, biography and romance.

The first period of our literature was largely formative, when the people's language, in the very process of its use, was being enriched with associative nuances and wider connotation, new idiom and epithet. The extant literature is largely mystical and didactic, in sententious gnomic verse, called *Vaakh*.

II

We come now to the second period, 1555 to 1752. During this period Persian is firmly established not only as the official language but also as the language of literature, and talented Kashmiris turn to it for giving expression to their thoughts and feelings. Maulana Sheikh Yakoob Sarfi Ganai (1552—1594) produced his encyclopaedic work during this time ; and to this time belong also Mirza Akmal-ud-Din Kamil (1642—1717) the author of *Bahar-ul-Irfaan*, a Persian masnavi of 80,000 couplets, and Khawaja Habib Ullah Nawsheri (1555—1617), who wrote treatises on mysticism. While these substantial products of mind find expression in Persian, songs continue to be written in Kashmiri. Many of these songs are mystical in the *vaakh* style. This for instance :

ye'my ko'r sara panun paan
mas baanan t'haan mutsaraa'vith gav
chiv lagyas hosh nashas
mashas pananuy paan
na su zaani he'ndy vwapath
na su musalmaan.

Whosoever realizes his own true self,
uncovers the vessels of wine,
overflows with joy, is intoxicated,
and forgets his lower self.
He will not know a Hindu
or a Musalman.

But in many other songs there appears a pronounced change. They become longer in the length of the line and the number of lines, and a refrain is added to them as, for instance, in this poem ascribed to Khwaja Habib-Ullah Nawshehri.

a'shku'ni maa'daana traavyaam hay
hay tavay t'ot'hyom paanay day

ye'mi da'ryaawa a'sy paa'daa gay
layi roz tamikuy may aaparay
"vaj'alnaa minalmaa-i kul shayin hay"
hay tavay t'ot'hyom paanay day

kentsav pyaala cay payaapay
kentsan cavaan sapuduy tay
kenh gav taari ta kentsan chu say
hay tavay t'ot'hyom paanay day

I surrendered completely to love,
and God is pleased with me.

Be true in love and you will have
a taste of the wine which fills the River of Life
that brought us hither; from whose waters
God hath made every living thing.

Some drink cup after cup unceasingly;
some, while drinking, attain to the Goal;
some wait and they still have hope;
some wait and wait, unavailingly.

The chief contribution of this period is, however, a new kind of song which tells of secular human love. This is the *lol* lyric, a song set to music, wherein the poet sings of his *lol*, a Kashmiri word signifying an untranslatable complex of love,

longing and a tugging at the heart. The *lol* lyric is a short poem, an utterance of a single mood, rarely in more than six or ten lines, including the refrain It is a thing of music, a very melodious music, with its end-rhymes and medial rhymes and ever-recurring refrains, its alliterations and assonances that come naturally as the very stuff of the language which has a high proportion of vowels and semi-vowels to its consonants, and in which aspirates, gutterals and harsh consonants are rare. There is a looseness and a flexibility of rhythm as in the verse of Lal Dyad, and the metre is not yet made to fit in quite within the precision of Persian quantitative pattern. It is not an intellectual lyric, it states no theme. It is written as though to relieve the mind in song and to find.

> "......a very echo to the seat
> where love is throned."

And, as in the *braja* tradition, it is the woman that is the lover and seeks to give utterance to her love. She sings of love in many moods : the spring is come, the flowers are in bloom, and the kokil (turtle-dove) and tiriv (bush-chat) are here but 'where are you ?'

1. ranga ranga saa'ry gul aay
   madano kati caa'ny jaay
   raa'naa zebaa gulaab aay
   shab-boy maa'nziposh swanaposh draay
   kaaripa'ty ta so'mbulan ka'r graay
   madano kati caa'ny jaay
   Flowers have bloomed in all their hues,
   Love where are you ?
   The rose has come, graceful and lovely,
   the tuberose, the balsam, and the *sonaposh* have come,
   the larkspur and the hyacinth have burst daintily into bloom,
   Love, where are you ?

2. la'j phulay andvanan
tse' kanan go'ynaa myon
la'j phulay kolasaran
vwo'thu neeryan khasu'vo
pho'j yosman andvanan
tse' kanan goynaa myon
The distant meadows are in bloom,
hast thou not heard my plaint?
Flowers bloom in mountain lakes,
come, let us to mountain meads.
The lilac blooms in distant woods,
hast thou not heard my plaint?

Then the long long waiting till the days drag; but he does not come and the yearning deepens:

kukile puu'ry kava traa'vith kwalaraadan
dukale vwandi myon gav
me' kale caane braa'nty gaa'mo naadan
aadanbaaji myaani yaaro ve
tsento ladu'ry posh pho'ly kwalaraadan
az chum aadan vaatahamay
dihamay darshun sar vanday paadan
aadanbaaji myaani yaaro ve
Like a kokil-dove you moved along the wandering rills,
and distraction filled my heart.
Beguiled by love, I fancied you were calling me,
My Love, Companion of my Youth!
Think of the flower bloom along the rivulet banks,
this is the time I look for you,
this is the time for you to come.
O, were you to come,
I would lay down my life for you,
My love, Companion of my Youth!

Then comes the questioning and doubting of Love's fidelity, and wailing and lamenting. It is true that we find little abandon to joy, sensuous or supernal, and little gaiety of tone in these songs. They usually sing of absence and separation and even infidelity ; but some of them can be very lovely, as lovely, as such songs and airs can be. This delicate song for instance :

myaani madan hiyo hiyo
cham caa'ny laadan
haa yiyo yiyo
darshun diyo diyo
cham caa'ny laadan
aadana tse'y suu'ty karyaam vaaday
vaada kavad'o'lham piyo piyo
cham caa'ny laadan
My Love, my Jasmine, my Jasmine,
I long for thee.
Come, O come,
and show thyself;
I long for thee.
I plighted, when young, my troth to thee,
why didst break thy troth, O sweet, O dear ?
I long for thee.

Or, this one, more substantial but equally musical :

yaam hoori me' t'oori tsandun mo'loomay
taamath tso'loomay yaar ve'see
dapyaam aagas bo' roshi zaagas
laagas bo' sheri hee
vwandu'kis baagas poshaah pho'loomay
taamath tso'loomay yaar ve'see
Hardly had I, a budded houri, bathed me in sandal-oil,
when Love deserted me and went away.
Methought I would lie in wait for him,
with jasmine to crown his head ;

a rare flower had bloomed in the garden of my heart—

when Love deserted me and went away.

These songs are, in a sense, typically Kashmiri, but they are now dead, they are no longer written. Most of them are of unknown authorship and have come down to us by word of mouth and oral tradition; while many of them are found recorded, interspersed, among Persian songs and ghazals, in the manuscripts of *mausiqis* or songs set to music, with appropriate directions of *raag* and *taal* and *muqaam*. Two famous writers of these *lol* lyrics are undoubtedly women. Haba Khatoon, who lived in the sixteenth century and romantically became the spouse of the last Chak King, Yusuf Shah, conquered and exiled by Akbar; and A'rnimaal, the disappointed spouse of the talented author of Persian *bahari taveel*, Munshi Bhawani Das, who lived later, in the Afghan times and therefore, strictly chronologically speaking, belongs to a later period viz., 1752 to 1819.

At a time when, by the sixteenth century, the challenge of Persian was overpowering, it is to the credit of Haba Khatoon to have not only revived interest in Kashmiri songs but, what is more significant, to have given it a new kind of *lol* lyric a secular song lyric, and to have given it, so to say, a royal status, a *muqaam* in the Kashmiri classical music known as *soofiana kalaam*. Indeed, she is said to have composed a *muqaam* (a *raag*), a musical composition, known as *raast-i Kashmir*.. Though the beginnings of it might be traced to earlier times, it is, I believe, beyond doubt, that, from the evidence available, it is to her that we owe also what may be called *Kaa'shur geet* or, perhaps, *vatsan*. The metres and rhyme-schemes of these *geets* or *vatsan* are various but each unit is a stanza of three lines followed by a refrain (*vooj*). These songs soon became popular as *chakri* songs and *rohv* songs; and, later in the nineteenth century, *Lila* songs and even long narrative poems, like Paramanand's *Sudamcarit*,

came to be written in this form. The form was set by Haba Khatoon's songs beginning

vwolo myaani poshe madano .....
(Come, my flower-mad Voluptuary, come)
or Kaa'nsi mo raa'vin shoore paan......
(May no one lose her prime with love unblest)
and tsu' kamyoo swani myaani bram dith nyunakho
(Which one of my rivals has enticed you away),

This, the second period of our literature, gave us many more songs of love in many moods, songs of the spinning wheel, of saffron fields, of domestic happiness and woe, "some natural sorrow, loss or pain"; and most of them were included in the repertoire of the classical musician or the folk minstrel.

Some of these songs enshrine a longing for God. Hindu and Muslim cultures were trying to find a common meeting ground in mysticism, both philosophy and discipline; and we find poets singing of "annihilation in the Divine", of divine love in God's Dominion "where is no Hindu nor Musalman". This of Khwaja Habib, for instance:

ti boozith yi gatshi mashun
pashun tsali dwan aalaman
khaakas nishi neraan swan
graako sway kaan parzanaavtan
kaama krooda looba nishi gatshi nashun
pashun tsali dwan aalaman

you must give up *this* when you give ear to *that*;
then will you have no regrets in both the worlds.
From this earthy body comes out gold,
O seeker, dig deep and discover that mine of gold,
abjuring lust, anger and greed.
Then will you have no regrets in both the worlds.

Or

a'myday soorama'ty sa'ny-yaa'sy
tsoori dil ti myon vwadaa'sy niv

jati' chas gang ta hati shaahmaaro
d'yaki chus shoobaan tsa'ndramataar
athi chis poshiky amryatakhaa'sy
tsoori dil to myon vwadaa'sy niv
The ash-besmeared Ascetic, the Sannyasi,
it is He has stolen away my heart.
Down His matted locks the Ganga flows,
the cobra entwines His neck,
His brow is illumined by the moon's soft light,
in his hands he holds nectar in flowers
bell-shaped.
It is He has stolen away my heart.

The *vaakh* continued to be written notably by Rupa Bhawani (1925-1721 c), which are esoteric and in a language somewhat obscure and now become obsolete. They give evidence of the change that had come over the language ever since the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and, more so perhaps, of the fact that the *vaakh* were recorded even while they were spoken or, at any rate, not longer after. To illustrate the easier ones :

1. saa'rith gat'a traa'vith gwaashas tsaayas
   maa'rith saa'ry yim caa'niy paantsh yinday,
   tavay sahazkali yu:g saa'dith
   sarvavaa'di zaa'nim gyaan paanas hyuhu

2. darni praa'vum ta swarne pyayas
   Haraa vwany tsu'y bar vusurum,
   dim kosum jarit ta a:sum tsu'y
   aas ka'rtham tay khaa'sy barum

Perhaps translated they may be put as follows :

1. Feeling my way through darkness, transcending
   the indriyas five Thou gavest me,
   I entered Thy light, and practising the yoga
   of *Sahajkala*, I realised the truth :
   all paths of Seekers lead to the self-same goal.

2. In *dharana* I realised, O Lord,
   it is for Thee to open Thy gates.
   The flowering and fruition is in Thy gift, but
   I would have Thee and naught besides.
   Thou filled me with hope, and now
   It is for Thee to fill my cups.

Then there is *Sri Krishnavtara-lila* based, like the *Prem sagara* of India, on the tenth *Skandha* of the *Bhagvata Purana* which it follows closely and some passages of which are almost translations. It was published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1928 with an English translation by Sir George Grierson who admits that he could not satisfy himself as regards the identity of the author of this poem. The colophon does certainly mention " *dyoon* " in verse 1172 but it is not a pen-name as Sir George thinks. It is merely an epithet, and, in the context, it can mean that the poet is "a humble suppliant" before "the Lord of the humble "

> ' dyoon aas sharan Krishna-paadas ta
> sharan aas ta kona t'ot'hyam
> paa'ry paa'ry tasu'ndis paana to'thanas ta
> laagas boh dasta dasta pamposh."

The poem is, by family tradition, attributed to Saheb Kaul, who lived in Aurangzeb's time, though the language of the poem, ordinary Kashmiri of the present day, differs materially from the other extant manuscripts by him. What is, however, more significant is the prosody of the poem and if it does belong to about this time. it is the first Kashmiri poem written in the *Lila* style. The first and the third lines of each verse, throughout the whole poem, end in the syllables as *ta* and, as pointed out by Sir George, the *as*, in the great majority of cases, is preceded by a short syllable. The *ta* is generally a mere pleonasm, meaning "thereupon", and is inserted between the participle and the main verb as in " hyath *ta* draav, " "pheerith *ta* dapane lo'g." We find also that the metre is usually based on stress, four stresses in each line, rather than

a strict quantity. This is also true of the other *lila* poems or narratives written in the *lila* style. The poem consists of verses of four lines each, the fourth line being the same thoughout the entire work as, later, in the narrative poems of Paramananda. The first and the third lines of each verse may be said to have feminine endings, i, e , an accented syllable followed by an unaccented as *paadas ta*, *t'ot'hanas ta*, while the second and the fourth have masculine endings e.g., *t'ot'hyam* or *pamposh*.

III

In an alternative scheme of period-wise division of Kashmiri literature, one may plausibly conclude the second period by about 1720, at the death of Rup Bhawani or, perhaps with equal plausibility, carry the concluding date to about the end of the eighteenth century to include the only two significant poets, A'rnimal and Shah Gafoor, of the later half of the century. The former carried on the tradition of Haba Khatoon, writing the secular song lyrics which have found a place in our Soofiana Kalaam and which have an unrivalled tenderness and poignancy e. g., songs beginning

> a'rynirang gom shra:vu'ny hiye
> kar yiye darshun diye.........
> A full-blown jasmine, I
> turned pale as yellow rose.
> when will my Love come to me ?

or

> me' shoka yarasu'ndi bar'y mas-pyaalata
> aalav deetose
> For Love I filled cups on cups of wine,
> Go friend, call out to him.

Shah Gafoor was a mystic, what we here call a *hama-os* sufi, a sufi who believes that all that is He. These sufi songs are, strictly speaking, not in conformity with orthodoxy ; but it is significant that in Kashmir there has been a long tradition of them and most of the sufi poets, the best of them certainly, have belonged to this tradition. This may not necessarily

show a study of Hindu mysticism for most of them have been almost or wholly unlettered, but it does probably show an influence of a local Hindu tradition which had, from quite ancient days, prevailed here and it was certainly a result of a free association of the Hindu and sufi mystics. The orthodox here call it *shastu'r* (shastra); and Shah Gafoor's poems entitled *Soo hamsoo* and *Su os paanay* are an illustration in point.

IV (The Interregnum)

The later half of the eighteenth century is a bleak period. There is little literary output in this as well as in a large part of the preceeding period of our literature : and we find little abandon to joy, sensuous or supernal, and little gaiety of tone in poetry. People had lost their independence, and the times were torn by faction and feud. They lacked national aspiration and there was little to fill them with high stirrings. The rulers had turned into mere oppressors of the people and the land of plenty had become a land of scarcity, of recurring famine, flood and epidemic. Their songs naturally expressed man's helplessness and counselled resignation to fate or a quiet fortitude and faith in God. With the coming of the Sikhs in 1819 law and order was restored though not without much avoidable ruthlessness.

About the last years of the eighteenth and the turn of the century we may be certain that a new movement was afoot which began to flourish by about the twenties of the nineteenth century and lasted with vigour till the end of the first quarter of the present century. This is, in my opinion, reason enough te treat the whole third period from 1752 to 1925 as one period. It may however, be sub-divided as follows :-

a) 1752 to the end of the century or till 1819 which marks a political change with the coming of the Sikhs, and may be called an interregnum.

b) 1800 or 1819 to 1846, when the Dogra rule replaced that of the Sikhs ;

c) 1846 to 1885 when Pratap Singh became the Maharaja ; and

d) 1885-1925; the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh which concludes a period of literature as well.

V

The nineteenth century has been a prolific period of our literature. In the previous centuries Persian had spread even to the countryside through *Maktabs* (Persian Schools) and was firmly established as the literary language of the educated classes. We find that Kashmiri literary men, albeit of the countryside mostly, began to own their native tongue and use it for their poetical compositions, inevitably modelling their verse on Persian. As does often happen, the new movement owed its impetus to the influence of a foreign language and literature and several literary art-forms were borrowed and put to use, enriching the indigenous literature. To this impetus we owe the growth of *masnavi* and *ghazal*, and there is, as has happened elsewhere, a spate of translations and adaptations from Persian orginals ; and the Kashmiri poet turns to old Persian themes of legend and story and history, to Yusuf and Zulaikha, Shirin and Farhad, Laila and Majnun, Sohrab and Rustum and many more. The poets write their Kashmiri *masnavis* in the couplet form employing Persian *bahar* or metre notably *bahar-i-hazaj* : and, inevitably again, introduce Perian words and phrases. Kashmiri verse loses its flexibility and the metre is now more correct and straitlaced. Being a sweet language, Persian lent itself easily and musically to a welding with Kashmiri ; but we find many of our poets borrowing wholesale not only words but epithets and phrases, often stale enough, and hackneyed imagery and figures of speech, conceits and insincere hyperbole of a decadent Persian poetry. Nevertheless, the Kashmiri poet introduces some striking features and sometimes strikes original conceit ; and besides, selects a theme from local tradition like that of Hi:maal and

Naa'gyraay or Akanandun or from the Indian epics and Puranas like the *Ramayana* and *Nala Damayanti.*

It is not as if the older forms were altogether discarded. The Kashmiri *geet* or *Vatsan* (a stanza sequence of three lines followed by a refrain) was now successfully employed for long narrative poems as in Paramanand's *Sudama Caritra* and *Radha-Swayamvara,* and for the devotional *Lila* lyric. *Rohv* and *Chakri* songs, *geet (vatsan),* ghazals and mystical verse continued to be written but not the *lol* lyric which became a thing of the past. The lyrics of the earlier age had few allusions and fewer ornaments ; they had directness, simplicity and a tender poignancy of feeling. The songs and ghazals of this century are more sophisticated ; references to lovers famous in Persian song and story are more numerous ; and while they lose some of their former melody, they gain in sensuousness and ornateness. But the Kashmiri poet still draws on his own legend and speaks of Bombur and Lolar, of Hi:maal and Naa'gyraay or of Haa'r and Poshinool and Kukil, (myna, golden oriole and turtle-dove), Ya'mbu'rzal, So'mbul and Virykyum (narcissus and daffodil, hyacinth and colchicum). In the mystical verse too there is a change in phrase, idiom and symbol. Following the Persian tradition, the mystic poet sometimes advocates the cult of the tavern and wine-cup, and a freethinker's indifference to convention, ritual and popular religion.

There is in Kashmir a long tradition of what may be called a comic-satiric verse on contemporary events, deriving from the famous Sanskrit poet, Kshmendra of the eleventh and twelth centuries. The nineteenth century also gave rise to a comic-satiric ballad, expressing the Kashmiri's satiric humour, and describing the discomfiture and pitiable plight of the people under the stress of natural calamities like flood, famine and currupt officialdom and also their funny adjustments necessitated by the new conditions. And, the Kashmiri developed the gift of laughing at himself. These ballads came to be

known as *shahar-aashob* written in masnavi-style couplets, and *lad'ishah*, written in the Kashmiri *vatsan* form.

Moreover, there is a large body of songs comprising domestic folk poetry, marriage songs and funeral songs and "lytierses" or harvest or cowboy songs and lullabies, the stuff of which folk songs are made. The century also saw the beginnings of Kashmiri prose; and several collections were made of folklore and proverbs and, notably for the first time, of folk-tales

VI

Of the first sub-period of the nineteenth century the chief poets are Mahmud Gami of Duir Shahabad near Verinag who died in 1855, and Wali Ullah Motoo (d 1858-60c). Mahmud Gami had been to a *maktab* and knew Persian well and wrote a few Persian ghazals like the one beginning,

آمد به چمن گل بدنے موئے میانے
آزاده وشے باده کشے مست جوانے

It is said that when his son, Sultan Shah, died in the prime of his youth, he burst into lamentation and wrote a *marsiya* (an elegy) on him; and that was the start of his compositions in Kashmiri. He seems, very rightly, to have felt that he could not express his inmost feelings except in his own mother tongue; and so when he felt the urge to express his deep sorrow and passionate love, he expressed it in Kashmiri songs and ghazals. He knew that Kashmiri was looked down upon by the learned men of the time who, rather contemptuously, called him a *gaa'mee*, a rustic poet; but the epithet stuck and he showed courage in gladly accepting it.

Mahmud Gami bestrode the times he lived in and, indeed, the whole century, like a colossus. He has been an innovator; and to him we owe not only the Kashmiri *masnavi* but also the ghazal modelled closely on Persian. The ghazal is, by

and large, used to express love or mystical thought and usually contains about a dozen verses. Both the hemistiches of its first verse have the same *radif* (double rhyme) which recurs at the end of every verse. But Mahmud has also written some lovely songs in the traditional *geet* or *vatsən* form like the ones beginning.

1. ka'rtham manz vwandas jaay
   me' no maay mashee zaanh ... ..

2. kar saa' myon nyaay ande
   maa'rymande madanvaaro ......

3. laa'ny tsooran laa'jnas daavas
   baal baavas panu'nuy haal ......

4. ay turk-i qabaaposhi yaman
   thavtu' ba man gosh
   may nosh dar aaghoshi saman
   thavtu' baman gosh .. ...

in which, as in some others, he has succeeded in using Persian and Kashmiri without any glaring incongruity of sound or sense e. g.

rath vanda caanyan maa'nzi naman
athu' chiy maa'nze posh
locaras chi saa'ree lonci laman
thavtu' ba man gosh
'ashaaq chi dar khaak tsaman
ka'rith faraamosh
Mahmud golus caa'ny gaman
thavtu' be man gosh

5. haantsalo tso'lham tsoore
   raavarovtham shu:re paan

6. katyoo chukh nundabaane
   vwalo maashoka myaane

In some songs Mahmud has introduced, what may be called, a varying refrain, an instance of which is the deservingly well-known song beginning

> roshi vwala posh ho laagay
> gosh thaavtam vanu'yo zaa'ree

in which after every 3-line stanza of a Kashmiri *vatsun* occurs not the refrain but a different line which, however, rhymes with the refrain.

Then there are a few mystical songs quite in the tradition like the famous one beginning

> tamseeli aadam pru'tshom hubaabas
> rinda chukh zinda kitha aabas suu'ty

or the one with the refrain

> *paanay paanas vuchne aav*

It is his ghazals, however, which set a pattern for his successors, some of whom imitated or, at least, adopted the *radifs*, the end-rhymes, of his ghazals like

> یارہ میانے مارہ کن منز پان ھو وتھہ تی پنریا
> تارہ کن منز ماہ تاباں منڈہ چھووتھہ تی پنریا

He introduced also man as lover as against woman as the lover and man as the beloved of the Kashmiri song and lyric. For instance, in the ghazal beginning

> ami noori wmrah-akhsaari haa'vith tsoori nyoonam dil
> ami doori darshun dith me' swargu'ci-hoori nyoonam dil

He also introduced a new type of song which had no doubt been in the making much earlier as a folk song but which got into vogue after a poet of repute like Mahmud Gami began to try his hand on it. This is the *Ro'vh* or *Ro'ph* song. When 'Id is approaching and the month of Ramadhan is about to end or, in the villages, at the time of harvest or a

local festival, preferably on an evening when the moon is up and "the heavens are bare", the young ladies and the country lasses will come out and divide themselves into groups and the groups fall in rows, interlocked in a kind of shoulder-and-waist lock. The participants, thus interlocked with their arms outstretched over the shoulders and round the waists of their fellows on either hand, form solid interwoven rows at a distance of a few paces, each row facing the other. Then begins the ro'v, a swing-like movement of the rows, keeping time to the rhythmic tune and its refrain. Mahmud has written a few ro'v songs which are still sung, like the famous one which is sung with a repeated refrain at the end of each line e. g.

> sa'mytav viginyav ro'ph hay karavay
> *ro'ph hay karavay*
> sangarmaalan tshaaye lo lo
> *tshaaye lo lo*
> (Come, O fairies, let us dance,
> *let us dance*
> sheltered from light by the mountain peaks
> *the mountain peaks*)

Mahmud also wrote other kinds of poems like *na't* (eulogium) in praise of the Holy Prophet, prayer hymns and even elegies, but except Zulaikha's lament for Yusuf in his masnavi *Yusuf Zalaikha*, these are little known.

Mahmud has, however, been remembered for his masnavis of which he wrote eight, excluding the 88-couplet masnavi entitled *yak Hikaayat* which movingly describes the grief of the Holy Prophet for the sins of the faithful. They are *Laila Majnoon*, *Yusuf Zulaikha*, *Sheikh Sanan* *Shirin Khusro*, *Harun-ul-Rashid*, *Mahmud Ghaznavi*, *Sheikh Mansur* and *Pa'halynama* This last is the translation of the Shepherd's Episode in Maulana Rumi's Mathnavi in which the author sometimes quotes verses from the original persian with their

translation into Kashmir. Here is an interesting example :

ye'li pohluy khyo'l traa'vith draavtay
te'li Kaleemas tora nidaa aavtay

وحی آمد سوئے موسےا ازخدا-بندهٔ مارا زما کردی جدا
تو برائے وصل کردن آمدی-نے برائےفصل کردن آمدی

Yaa Moosaa aakh yaa'ree laagu'ne
kinı aaham baalayaaras zagu'ne
yaa Moosaa kyuth yi ko'ruth kaar tse
nishi judaa kavu'ko'ruth dildaar tse

There are a few glowing verses on love in this masnavi.

All these masnavis are mostly translations or abridged adaptations from Persian originals of Nizami, Jami and others but Mahmud has sometimes, as in *Yusuf Zulaikha*, varied the metres and included ghazals and snogs in them, a pattern which has been followed by other writers of Kashmiri masnavis. They are love romances, and they reveal a true poetic quality of passion while his descriptions are rich and ornate, sometimes bordering on the gorgeous. He had to borrow his diction and imagery from Persian which, while it enriched the language, did not always harmonize with it and sometimes leaves an effect of utter incongruity as, for instance, in many verses of Yusuf Zulaikha. In writing his masnavis it appears he was overwhelmed by his Persian learning and by the Persian original works which he translated and adəpted and unlike, as in his songs and ghazals, he could not transform them to suit the Kashmiri language or its temper. He uses not only Persian words but also Persian constructions as well e.g.,

aval hamdaa ta'mis ye'my paida kor jaan
zameen-o aasmaan-o 'ishq-u 'irfaan

In these eleven words only three are Kashmiri : a pronoun in the objective case, *ta'mis* (to him) ; a conjunctive

pronoun, ye'my, (who) ; and a past-tense anxiliary of the finite verb, *ko'r* (did). The second hemistich is purely Persian, words as well as construction. Moreover, it is not that he borrowed too many words from Persian that gives the effect of incongruity but that the diction is often enough listless and stilted, artificial and imitative, not racy of the soil, even when the requisite vocabulary was available, and, what is worse, the foreign words are unassimilated to the genius of our language. We call this *rekhta*, a 'plastered' language, as against the language he himself used in his songs and ghazals and occasionally, in his masnavis also as in the sad lamentations of La'l Mirjaan (in *Mahmud Gaznavi*).

Mahmud Gami was considered a *mard-i-ustaad*, a master poet, in his own time by his contemporary Wali-ullah Motoo ; and there is little doubt that he gave a new lease of life to Kashmiri poetry which is indebted to him for several of its art-forms.

Wali-ullah Motoo deserves to be remembered for his masnavi *Heemaal* which, for the first time, poetized a local theme from our ancient legendary lore. This is a translation of a Persian mathnavi by *Sadar-u-din* entitled *Qissa Arzan Va Heemaal*. His language is, comparatively, simple : less ornate and unstifled by incongruous Persian diction ; and, what is more, he does maintain, what may be called, the Kashmiri poetic temper, as, for instance, when he contrasts a good and a bad wife, when he describes Heemaal's distraction at the disappearance of Naa'gyraay, or when he narrates the dialogue between them at the time of the discovery of his caste.

The total impression of the narrative has, however, been seriously marred by the introduction of events which are not corroborated by the legend as it has come down to us from oral tradition This would perhaps not very much matter ; but these events and characters not only make for confusion but mitigate against the romantic atmosphere of it. Heemaal turns

herself on the funeral pyre of her murdered lover, and brings to a fitting romantic close the sad end of her love. But the poet has made her lover a Muslim dressed as a "Kafir", who would not disclose this to her beloved so far even though he had been to Mecca on the Pilgrimage. The poet does not feel that the hero can thus fall in our estimation not because he is a true Muslim but because he is not ; he has deceived his beloved into marrying him and has not had the courage to tell her who he was. What is more, all this time the poet has told us that the lover was no human being but belonged to the world of Peris (fairies). At the very end, therefore, the poet introduces, by a deus ex machina, Fakirs who, by their miraculous powers, come all on a sudden from Medina to turn the ashes of the funeral pyre into the dead bodies of the lovers so that they could be buried according to the prescribed rites. This is an inartistic interference with the legend which, even in the poet's own version, makes Naa'gyraay take the form of a snake from a water-spring, and which can be a proper milieu only for a story relating to the Nagas. The legend, it may be emphasized, makes the story a story of love between an Aryan princess and a Naga prince.

Walli-ullah's masnavi contains ghazals too but they are not from his pen. They were written for him by his friends, two of them by Azizullah Khan and 19 of them and the four introductory *Na'ts* (eulogiums) by Zarif Khan. He also translated *Cihil Asraar* of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani and *Zarooriyaat-i deen.* These he wrote to make them easily intelligible to his co-religionists but they have little literary importance.

It is difficult to place the sufi poets of the sub-period because we are not sure of their dates of birth and death. Some of them, though born earlier in this sub-period, died at least 15 years later, that is, in the succeeding sub-period. I place Karim Buland, Momin Saa'b, Shah Qalandar and Shukur Rishi here. Little of their poetry is extant but what little there is does show that it has been a loss not to have it as e.g.,

Shukur Rishi's *vanay dardu' nayistaan ;* Momin Saa'b's *paanamanza paan prazanaav lolo* and *ratsi ratsi matshi maaz khyo'nye lo ;* and Shah Qalandar's *yaa'ry nyoonam dil, Kaamadiv divu'ye Maanasbal* and a few more.

VII

The next sub-period, 1846—1885, is the peak sub-period of the third and longest period of Kashmiri literature that spreads from 1752 to 1925. The chief poets of it are Paramanand and Prakash Ram, Maqbul Shah and Lachman Raina, Rasul Mir and Shams Fakir. Except for the last, all of them were dead by 1885 ; and even in the case of those who were born much earlier than 1846, it would probably be true to say that they did their best work during this sub-period.

Paramanand (1791-1885) was perhaps the oldest of them. He and his school represent the *Lila-group* of poets, whose forte is a poetic composition singing hymns in praise of the *lila* (literally, play) of the personal aspect of God, chiefly as Krishna, the Avatar. In their poems there is greater abandon and joy than is to be found in any other Kashmiri poetry. They are primarily devotional poems, saturated with religious mysticism. The universe exists : it is real and it is good. Indeed all creation is an over-flowing of God's joy, a *lila*, a Siva's dance. No believers in asceticism and aloofness from the world, these poets stress the inward experience rather than outward formalism and prefer *bhoga* to *tyaga*, enjoyment to renunciation, in the Kashmiri Trika Saivite tradition. Paramanand sings.

> Raas is love's expanse broadening into an ocean ;
> Raas is equipoise mid sour and sweet ;
> Raas is where there is no trace of sin.
> Our dance is devotion, yoga and Jnana,
> Our dance is samadhi in "wakeful activity".

We may trace the origin of *lila—lyrics* to songs in *Sri Krishnavtar-Lila* of the previous century or even go further back to Habib Ullah Navshehri's *yaara gatshu'vo divu'ye* (Friend, let's go to the festival).

Parmanand lived up to a ripe old age, and wrote three long narrative poems, *Siva Lagan* (the Marriage of Siva), *Radha-svyamvara* (the Choice of Radha's Spouse), and *Sudama Carit* (the Story of Sudama). In these three poems the narrative moves on from episode to episode, filling in descriptive touches while it moves on scattering a wealth of phrase and imagery. In the first of these the allegory obtrudes itself most on the readers' mind, in the third it is the least felt ; while the second is the most musical of them. Each of these narrative poems has the unity of a great mystical idea, the love of God for man and of man for God. As narrative poetry, however, *Sudama Carit* is unsurpassed in Kashmiri literature for its noble opening, economy of language, narrative flow, simple but forceful diction, and also for the sublimation of its story with a spiritual allegory which unobtrusively but nonetheless effectively lends it significance. Sudama is the Jiva and Krishna is the Lord. Sudama is the friend of Krishna in his childhood when he knows no self and nonself, but soon the ego intervenes and he separates from the Lord and suffers misery and privation, which the human ego causes, till his spouse Sushila (the Right Intuition) advises him to take the road to the Kingdom of God at Dwarika, where Krishna reigns in all his glory.

Parmananda's language is Sanskritized, as in *Shiva Lagan* but in *Sudama Carit* it is remarkably pure. It must be said that even in other poems when he borrows words from Sanskrit he so modifies them that they become naturalized Kashmiri words, being adapted to its peculiar phonetics, grammer and syntax. He does not just borrow words and use them but almost always so fits them to the context that they become inevitable. He uses the native colloquial idiom with verve and

effect and there is a terse pointedness and proverbial ring about numerous of his verses like *yas din tas yin toray naadas*. His descriptive poem, *Amarnatha Yatra*, the Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Amarnatha in the mid Himalayas in Kashmir, is remarkable for the accuracy of its descriptions though the reader grows impatient of the repeated stress on the inward yogic pilgrimage from plexus to plexus. Quite a few of his *lila* poems are difficult to interpret at places. They are overweighted with mystical allusions to "lotuses", "cakras" and "mandalas", and are replete with too many puns and rhyming jingles ; but very many of them are remarkable for their melody, devotion and deep spiritual conviction like the poems beginning

1. aaras manz atsu'vay vigine zan natsu'vay
2. kaasi yamu'bayi con pre'yam ta lo lo
3. karma boomikaayi dizi dharmuk bal
4. vaadas zyaada na zi kam

1. Come, let us join the ring
   and dance like fairies.
2. Thy love casts out all fear of death
3. Manure thy field of action with
   the loam of righteousness.
4. In abiding by thy contract,
   there can be neither more nor less.

There are other poems he wrote, less popular but more profound, wherein the meaning overweighs the music, and the language is terse, even elliptical, but where the poetic thought is expressed with rare mystic insight and truth. His poem, "Sahaz Vyatsaar" (Self-realization), for instance, beginning *gindunaah chu zinda marun Sahaz vyatsaar karun* (To seek unity with God is to venture forth).

Paramanand wrote his three narrative poems not in the *masnavi* couplet but in the Kashmiri *geet* or *vatsan* form, that is, in stanzas of three lines followed by a refrain, rhyming, in

Sudaamacarit and *Shivalagan*, *aa bb* and, in *Radha-svayamvar*, *abab*. Prakash Ram of Kurygom, however, wrote his *Ramayaan* in the masnavi couplet form, interspersing it with songs in ghazal-radif form as well as in *vatsan* form, which is the form used for *lila* lyrics. Up-to-date research makes it probable that he wrote the *Ramayana* in about 1847 and disproves Grierson's view that he lived in Srinagar much earlier in the time of Raja Sukhjiwan Mal, Governor of Kashmir from 1754 to 1762 A.D. We know now also that Grierson's edition is really an abridged edition of the work. It is probably true that Prakash Ram was born in the early years of the century and lived till 1885. He has been credited with other works like *Krishnavtara*, *akanandun* and *Shivalagan* and some other *lila* songs which have not yet been published.

Ramavtaarcarit of Prakash Ram has been written, like Tulsidas's *Ramacaritramanas*, on the lines of the *Adhyatma Ramayana*, making Sri Rama, not only a hero of an epic as he is in *Valmiki's Ramayana* but an avatar of Vishnu ; and, therefore, it is an unfolding of a divine *lila* or play in which events are pre-determined and have to be what they are. His *Lava Kusha Carit* is also on the same lines. There are many, a few too many, *stotis*, hymns in praise of Sri Rama as an avatar ; and he has put in certain episodes which do not occur in Valmiki or *Adhyatma Ramayana*, like the wickedness of Sita's younger sister-in-law (husband's sister) or the mention of Ravana being in truth her father and Mandodari her mother. There are a few other variations which we need not dwell upon here.

Prakash Ram's style is simple : there are no incongruities of diction which is not overweighted with newly-borrowed words from Sanskrit or Perso-Arabic. This, for instance, would be the masnavi style at its best, which is unmatched except in the *Greestnaama* of Maqbul Shah :

vuchun gatshi kyaah yi va'tsh aakaashu' vaa'nee
du'yee tsa'j la'j yine na'v paa'ry zaa'nee
a'chiv vuch lolu'cav satu'kyav kanav boz
na'mith beh vuch vanan kyaah Shiv ha'mith roz
he'chith boozith vuchith laagun pazyaa o'n
pha'lis chuy hyo'l he'lis chuy saa'npu'naan go'n
zu' doh sontu'vy ga'neemath chay javaa'nee
ti lonakh yee vavakh a'y yaar-i-jaa'nee
panun dam chuy ga'neemath boz ru'ts kath
chu broont'hum bront'h rozan chuy pa'tyum path

Nor is Prakash Ram verbose though there is a certain repetitiveness of episodes like that of Ahalya. His narrative flows unhindered though at places its flow is impeded by the *lila* songs which, it appears, the poet needs the least provocation to burst into, his main purpose being to inculcate piety and devotion rather than to tell a story. In poetic quality *Ramavtar Carit* and *Lava Kusha Carit* are inferior to the narrative poems of Paramanand, though there are, here and there, passages of beauty like the description of the search for Sita in Ravana's garden in which grow all the flowers known to a mid nineteenth century Kashmiri poet and which give it a local colour. There is the well-known poem on the spring:

aav bahaar bolu bulbulo
son vwalo barayo, shaa'dee
Spring is come, sing thou, O Bulbul ;
let us celebrate the advent of spring.

and the long lila-lyric, a fine one, entitled

bhajan kar *Rama Rama*.

It may also be said to the credit of Prakash Ram that his *Ramavtarcarit* is the first *razmia* masnavi in Kashmiri for it must be classed as such if the Kashmiri masnavis are classified on the basis of theme, that is, into *Bazmia* (love), Razmia (combat) and *Hazlia* (satiric) masnavis.

Lachman Raina 'Bulbul" belonged to Malapora. Srinagar, where he was born and bred up and where he had his schooling in a maktab and, later, in a *pathshala* He gives us a glimpse of his childhood in his poem *dihyi vaa'raag*. After the death of his parents, he left his home and visited Mathura, Delhi and Calcutta. On his return he got a job as Kuthyaal, a grain storekeeper, at Nagom, a village nine miles south-west of Srinagar, where he married and settled down. His wife fell down from a window and died, and thereupon he again left his home and wandered about, staying for sometime at Ishabar and, later, at Mattan, where he met Paramanand and became his disciple. It is on his persuasion that Lachman Raina went back to Nagom and remarried and had a son, who died early, and a daughter. A short while before his death at the age of 72, he composed a poem, the last line of which minus the first word *ki* gives the chronogram, 1955 Bikrami, (1898 A. D.) as the date of his death.

صبا با عندلیب گوکل ازبلبل نوا برگو
که زیر پائے عفو رام جی آمد شرن لخمن

Lachman Raina "Bulbul" has left us a few *lila* songs and ghazals, *Saamnaama*, *Nal-o-Daman*, *Caaynaama* and *Omnaama*. The lila songs are bhakti songs of utter devotion while one at least of his ghazals beginning, *yaaradaade ya'ts do'vum taapay do'dum taalyun ve'see* is become an anthology piece. *Omnaama* and *Caaynaama* are both short poems in the masnavi style, the one describing the greatness of the sacred Syllable *Om*, and the other expatiating on the virtues of "the cup that cheers but not inebriates". Lachman Raina was fond of tea and he asks for cups on cups of it from the Saki and sings its virtues even in his longer masnavis, *Saamnaama* and *Nal-o-Daman*, the former a *razmia* and the latter a *bazmia* masnavi.

Bulbul belongs, at the same time, to the *Lila* group of

poets as well as to the Masnavi poets ; but it is as the latter that he has made a mark and his contribution is significant. In his masnavi, *Saamnaama*, he has exercised the artistic discrimination of omitting several incidents from the Persian of Khwajoo Kirmani in *taqaarib bahar* used by Firdausi in his *Shahnama*. This has made his narrative more effective and given it a coherence and unity of impression which is marred in the *Saamnaa* of Amir Shah Kreeri, who, in all probability, wrote his *Saamnaama* quite a few years later. Moreover, Bulbul's style and diction and the narrative flow also add to its significance. Bulbul's version is not merely a translation ; and it shows that Kashrimi could assimilate Persian and avoid incongruity of the alien vocabulary characteristic of the *rekhta* style. His narrative is interspersed with impressive descriptive passages whether it be the beauty of Peridakht or the fierce ugliness of a Makokaal ; the grief of Saam over the reported sickness of Peridakht or their joy of re-union ; or the lamentations and prayers of Saam imprisoned in the deep well.

> va'nith kyaah hyaka ta'mysund d'yaka purnoor
> tajalli jalva maaraan bar Koh-e Toor
> du cashme mast-i o mas-khaa'sy ba'ry ba'ry
> na az may, az may-e naaz aa'sy ba'ry ba'ry
> vuchith suy bulbulan gul laa'gy paaman
> gulav dyut caak jaaman taa badaaman
> vanay seenas ba' aa'yeena guhar jaan
> vuchith suy seena aa'yeena chu haa'raan

Or, the description of Makokaal—

> kalas pyat'h hyang zan raa'yil palas pyat'h
> langav pe't'hy lang draamu'ty raa'yilas pyat'h
> ba soorath gooly kaatsur machi tecal
> phiraan a'ch drent'h yi:vaan naara vuzu'mal
> kwakarseenu'c vudar tas seena tay vach
> katshavaal aa'sy haapathnaaru'kuy kach

Or, the whole passage beginning

khabar gayi hoshi yith Saamas ze nairang
zinday paanas vuchin gaa'mu'ts kabar tang

in which occurs a noble prayer

خداوندااہ ژٕہ چھکھہ معبود میونے۔خداوندااہ ژٕہ چکھہ مقصود
میونے
کریما کارسازا بے نیازا - رحیما رازقا عاجز نوازا
علیما چھکھہ ژٕہ پانے عالم الغیب - قدیما چھکھہ ژٕہ پانے
ساتر العیب
چھسے بوبندۂ شرمندہ چونے- بہ بند غم گمت پابند چونے
چھسے بے چارہ بےکس چارہ کرتم - چھسے آوارہ وارہ
چارہ کرتم ... ...
قسم چھے انبیاھن اولیھن ھند۔قسم چھے مرسلان تہ صادقن ھند...
ندارم طاقت تیمار چندیں - اغثنا یا غیاث المستغیثیں !

This is mostly Persian but how well it fits in the narrative!

Saamnaama is one of our very few good masnavis and so is his less known *Nal-O Daman*, the theme of which is borrowed from *the Mahabharata*. He wrote the former in 1931 Bk (1874 A.D.) and the latter two years before his death in 1955Bk (1498 A. D .). *Nal-o Daman* has all the qualities of his *Saamnaama* and the diction is even purer and simpler and imagery has a more familiar local colour.

vuchan raazas a'ch phiry phiry ye'mbu'rzal
sazaposhuk zazur tsaamut gulan tas......
ta'mis d'eeshith galaan Nal sheenatral zan
a'chiv kiny khoon haaraan rood pashpan......
ye'mee maaye tse' ka'rthas hee ba' haaye
ye'mee raaye la'jis caane balaaye......

or the verses on Time which blooms iris on the graveyards and brings new glory in the spring to the treeless ravines and in autumn sets a garden aflame, and so on :

samay chu mandinyan vath raavaraavaan
samay chu Yusufan laagan ba zindaan
samay az caah khaaran maah-i-kanaan.

His masnavis are of uniform merit and there are hardly any weak lines unlike most other masnavis, which are of unequal merit in parts It must, however, be said that the ghazals in them are really poor in quality and they were better left out.

Mention must also be made of Bulbul's remarkable contribution to Parmanand's *Radhasvayamvar* viz., the Mohini episode, the meeting of Sri Krishna with Radha incognito as an itinerant milliner ; and of his *Sri Rama Gita* in Lila (vatsan) form which shows his mastery over this style e. g.,

sat asat vyatsu'ryze
Rama, Rama, Rama, ka'ryze
mo maan maan avmaan
zaan kar po'z apuz zaan
paanu'ro'stuy tsu' swar paan...
kaam krood loob traa'vith
mohamala man naa'vith
ahankaar ma'shraavith...
shama santoshi ve'ze
vaara vyatsaara paze
saada sangmu'ci raze...

Maqbul Shah (1820c-1875) was also born in about the twenties of the century in a Sayyid family in the village of Kraalawaa'r, south-west of Srinagar about 13 miles away, on the banks of the Che'ts Kwal stream. He suffered from ill health all his life, having contracted tuberculosis at an early age, He had more than his share of sorrows, losing his adopted son when young and his wife too a little later. His sorrow over the premature death of his son was great and it found expression in an elegy, in *mussadas* stanzas, which is probably the second personal elegy in Kashmiri. It is not modelled on the

classical Persian *marsiya* distinguishable by its form and conventional language and usually written on Karbala Martyrs. He holds his passionate sorrow in check but the very restraint bespeaks its intensity :

> dazu'vun jaan damav suu'ty she'hlaavun mushkil
> sabr bar marg-i-javaan dil he'chinaavun mushkil
> phat'u'vu'ni daari vwagni kaari chu raavun mushkil
> sarvi noorusta tsa't'ith moola chu traavun mushkil
> sakht mushkil chu jigarpaara a'chivtala raavun
> dilu'kuy farhat-o aaraam lahad-i manz saavun.

> (It is hard to soothe sorrow's burns with sighs,
> to teach heart patience, seeing a dear one die
> in handsome adolescence and bloom of youth.
> Distressing to see a graceful cypress felled
> uprooted to the ground, and one's own flesh
> and blood for ever vanish from the sight
> and sleep under the sod never to wake again.)

This note of passion, whether in the depiction of love or of sorrow, is a characteristic of his poetry ; and it distinguishes his famous love romance *Gulrez*, deservedly become popular. It contains 2,200 couplets, and 127 verses of songs and ghazals, in all 2327 verses which he completed in 1286 Hegira. It is passion that retrieves from mediocrity and its fate oblivion, the romance which, otherwise, written in a *rekhta* style in a set Persian poetic diction, would soon have been forgotten. Nosh Lab's beauty is described in set phrases like, *sarvikad, laala rwakhsaar, kaakuli shaahmaar, zulfi muskheen, maari pecaan, buma vanjar, abroo taaq, teer-i mijgaan, nasti-i khanjar, shakar lab, dahaanash gunci, dupistaanash taaza annaar, tan-i seemeen, kamar az moy baareek, ma'lith khoran hina kina khooni ashaaq*. And when Nosh Lab sees Ajab Malik (and it is a case of love at first sight), she uses about the same phraseology to depict his beauty : *mah jabin, gul rwakh, gesoy-e shaahmaar, nasti khanjar, shamshere du abru, shakar lab, gwanca dahan.*

zulfi mushkeen and the like. There is a repetitiveness in his descriptions.

Moreover, what distinguishes Maqbul Shah's *Gulrez* is the fact that it is not a translation of the obscure Persian original by Zia-ud-din Naqshabi written partly in verse and partly in prose. His poetic genius has transformed the whole story, not because he has left out any incident or episode of the original except a few irrelevant anecdotes and illustrative instances. He has, indeed, versified it whole and his glowing descriptions of the beauty of Nosh Lab, and of the garden where the lovers meet for the first time, are more detailed. But what is really significant, he has enlivened the romance with a rare passion as, for instance, in the lovers' dialogue or the lamentations of Nosh Lab beginning with the famous passage

> subuh pho'l bulbulav tul shor-u ghaughaa
> ga'yas bedaar mutsu'ryam cashm-i shahlaa......

Should Maqbul Shah have written only *Gulrez*, his contribution would be important, for other *rekhta* masnavis seem passionless and lifeless in comparison. But he has given us the first *hazlia* (satiric) romance, and the best of its kind, in his *Greestnaama* of a thousand couplets which is a telling satire on the Kashmiri farmer of his days in, what is rightly judged as, the masnavi style at its best.

> sazovul yo'd yiyakh tas bront'ha neran
> dinas dag mwat'h ta pyt'hu'kani jaay sheran
> ga'nd'ith guly rozanas phwarmaan bardaar
> pathar vas guri, saathaah be'h, masaa' maar
> tse' chiy naa koor go'bruy son aa'yut
> vuchaan a'sy raath aa'sy Bhath vaati maa yo't
> yiyakh ye'li doori peer d'eshinas yaam
> nyabar aa'sith atsan gaanas andar taam
> shuryan baa'tsan dapan to'hy vaara vuchtav
> be'shoonkuy vuchzi a'ty chaa kina syo'duv gav ..

go'mut vay tshaand'u'ne bab, dyad ga'mu'ts van
baban subahan dapyaanas zinyge'd'aah an

Maqbul Shah also wrote a 107-couplet masnavi, *bahaar-naama*, the first of its kind in Kashmiri, describing the approach of Spring : a satire of 140 couplets in masnavi style on the mullas of his time in *Peernaama;* a 203-couplet masnavi, *Mansoornaama* ; and, besides, a masnavi *Yusuf Zulaikha* He is also said to have written other shorter masnavis which are not extant viz., *aabnaama,be'boojnaama* and *naarnaama* describing respectively floods, tyrannies of the time, and the havoc wrought by fires. This has surely been an irreparable loss to Kashmiri literature Then there is a collection of his songs and ghazals, some of them mystical, entitled *Kuliyati Maqbul*, but songs and ghazals are not his *forte* though some of them as, for instance, the songs (in vatsan style) which occur in *Gulrez* are among the best of their kind, beginning

1. ve'siye gulan aavay bahaar
   az saala antan balayaar

2. tulakhnaa parda mastaanay
   vwalo bedarda jaanaanay

or 3. chaav gulroyi gulzaar
   haav deedaar la'tiye

A word may be said about Maqbul Shah's language. He could be at ease in both the styles, rekhta (ornate Persianised style) as well as the simple Kashmiri style. He used rekhta in *Gulrez* where he was, more or less, influenced by the Persian original and where he had to portray passionate sensuousness but he changed over to the purer style when he had to describe and satirize, in a familiar native colloquial idiom, the conditions obtaining in villages and their peasantry. But, even in his masnavis like *Gulrez*, he can so mix Persian and Kashmiri that not only is the stilted style relieved but a certain flavour and freshness is added to the narration or description e.g.,

asun ta'mysund lasun, maarun tagoful
khasun zuv aashkan ta'mysund vuchun ho'l

or, tharyan pyat'h kyaah vwazu'ly gulhaayi annaar
tsalan bulbul kulyan pyat'h maa hyo'tun naar

or, gulaabaah pho'l zi baag-e Shaah-i Nakhshab
sitaaraah kho't zi burj-e Shaah-i Nakhshab
thanapyav maaji nishi zan kaajikuy rav
vuchith Tafyur Shah masroor kyaah gav

Other poets of the period deserve a mention : Saif ud-din Tarabali (d. 1874) wrote the story of Heemaal Naa'gyraay under the little of *Sahr-i-Hilaal* in 1864. His verse is loaded with figures of speech and other ornaments of style freely borrowed from Persian ; and at times one doubts if he writes Persian or Kashmiri or, perhaps, a language which is neither. His *Heemaal*, comprising 2,111 verses, is. for its laboured and artificial style, much inferior to that of Vali-ullah Motoo. He wrote also some ghazals, and another masnavi *Wamiq Uzra*.

Abdul Ahad Nazim of Vejibror (d. 1865) wrote ghazals, na't and satire and the masnavi *Zain-ul-Arab*, the story of the love of Zain for Yaktaash for which she had to pay dearly with her own life, being murdered by her own brother, Haris. The masnavi appears to be a translation from Sheikh Farid-ud-din Attar's *Ilaahinama*. It is, however, his satires and parodies like that on Mahmud Gami's, *rinda chukh zinda kitha aabas suu'ty*, that are his remarkable contribution to Kashmiri, besides a few *ghazals* like the one beginning *yim zaar vanahas bardaar*.

Some other poets who continued to live after 1885 till about 1900—1905 may be placed here for their best work was done during this very sub-period. Maulvi Sidiq ullah Hajini (1832—1900) is known for his poem on *Shakl-u-shumaayil Aan Hazrat* (*Sala'm*) ; Mirza Mir (1811—1901), who wrote *Qisa Patwraiyaan Va Nambardaaran*, describing the tyrannies of

petty village officials; Sanaullah Kreeri (1813—1875) who wrote ghazals and na't; and Amir-ud-din Kreeri (1846—1905). Amir-ud-din is note-worthy for his *razmia* masnavis, *Saamnaama*, *Khaavarnaama*, and *Jang-i-Alqam*. He also wrote poems on *Meraji Ahmadi*, *Anwaari Muhammadi* and *A'jaazi Sarmadi*. He writes in rekhta style and, in his *Saamnaama*, follows the Persian original of Khwajoo Kirmani in all details.

In Rasul Mir (d 1870 c.) of Shahabad Door we have a poet who is pre-eminently a song writer. He is said to have, in his last years, written a masnavi *Zebaa Nigaar* but it is difficult to say if he did really write it. Anyway, since it is not available even in manuscript, nothing can be said about it. Rasul Mir is our best song writer, and even his ghazals sing. Now man loves woman: and he is lavish, almost uninhibited in describing her charms. His ghazals have a unity of impression which was not usually to be found in the ghazals before him; and he may be said to have succeeded, more than most of his predecessors and contemporaries and immediate successors, in acclimatising Persian words and phrases into Kashmiri. There is a note of passion and there is spontaneity, melody and rhythm in his songs which distinguish them from most other love songs and ghazals. He is frankly sensuous and, even unlike Maqbul Shah at the end of *Gulrez*, does not smother secular love poetry with any innuendos of love for God. His songs like *rinda poshimaal*, *rosh may rosh*, *haa'riye thaavakhnaa kan ta lo lo*, *yaara loguth sang dil*, *jaanaana masaa' rosh*, *bahaar aav*, *baal maraa'yo* or *lo la'ti lo*, will be sung as long as Kashmiri poetry lasts.

Rasul Mir is the first significant poet in Kashmiri who turned his back upon writing mystical verse. But the tradition continued though there was now a change in idiom and phrase in some though not all the mystical poets. A few of them wrote in the time-honoured vein of "something like the *shastra*" *shaastu'r hyoo*. The others, following the Persian tradition

more closely, advocate the cult of the tavern and the wine-cup and the hedonist indifference to ritual and popular religious observances.

The chief of these mystic poets are :

(a) Rahim Saheb of Sopore (d. 1870 c.), who seems to have known the *shastra* disciplines, *naa'ly Rahimas shaastu'r chuye*, and who has written about them with insight e.g.

> praan zolnam pavanu'ky naaran
> she'shkali hund naar me' chuye
> samaah ko'rnam a'my Omkaaran
> The fire of vital airs has lit a flame
> within my soul, and the glow of the Mystical Moon
> envelopes me. Aum has put me in tune ;
> it has destroyed the world for me.

(b) Na'ma Saheb of Cinkraal Mohalla, Srinagar, was born sometime early in the century and died about 1880.

He is less intense or ardent but also less obscure, less profound but more direct in expression. For instance: songs known by their refrains viz., *Kamyoo sheesha covnas may ; pyom tse'tas tas chu myon naav;—ve'pi no tate ; hoore me' nyoonam tsoori dil.*

Rahman Daar (d. 1897 c.) belonged to chatsabal, Srinagar, but he took to the life of a wandering dervesh. He will always be remembered for his poem *Shashrang.* in six 8-line stanzas, each rhyming *a b a b a b a b* which, for its metre and parallelism of rhymes, was a technical feat in Kashmiri. It, is besides, an intensely personal outpouring of a woman's love and longing and is distinguished for its sincere sentiment, true to the local tradition and, what is more, for its forceful diction. And yet it is, in truth, a mystic's longing for God-realisation. He has written other poems of merit, e-g., *kami swani ro'tnam yaar*, but they all suffer by comparison with *shashrang.* He is, however, also remembered for"Maanch Tulu'r"(Honey Bee)

which is a short verse dialogue between the Honey Bee and the Fly, the Honeycomb and the Poet It is an allegory wherein the Honeycomb is the Soul, the Honey Bee is Thought or Intelligence and the Fly is Desire ; and the Poet concludes that all the multitudinous creation is born of the Unity, the One Reality.

The prince of the mystical poets of the period is Shams Faqir (1843-1904) whose original name was Muhammad Sidiq Bhat. He is easily one of the best mystical poets in Kashmiri. He was a saint-poet in the best tradition of Kashmir's synthesis of sufism and Hindu mysticism ; and in him we find numerous references and allusions to Hindu mysticism, "shastra", as we call it, not in a strained but in an effortless natural manner. There is in him the quality that makes mysticism poetry, the quality of intense sincerity, of passion and abandon and, what is more, the authentic insight born of true mystical experience and realisation as in his peem *shinyva gatshythu'y, shastu'r polum sha'stu'r golum, zaatas sifaatas chay milu'van* ;

VIII

By 1885 most of the important poets of the previous sub-period were dead, and certain new influences begin to be discerned which mark the next sub-period, 1885-1925. Persian continued but, by about the turn of the century, the impact of Urdu and even Hindi from the neighbouring states began to be felt ; they were even introduced in the few Government schools that were started ; and the C. M. S. Schools began to teach English. In 1885, Maharaja Pratap Singh ascended the throne, and the State, now firmly under the suzerainity of the British Viceroy, began to emerge into the modern age. The Valley was opened up by means of metalled highway and post and telegraph connecting it with the Punjab via Rawalpindi and, later, via Jammu and Sialkot. At higher levels English was adopted as the official language instead of Persian. This

sub-period also saw the first beginnings of Prose and translation of the Bible into Kashmiri in Perso-Arabic characters.

The writing of masnavis still held the day ; and while Bazmia masnavis continued to be written, the sub-period may be distinguished more for its Razmia masnavis. We have a fairly large number of the latter kind though they hardly rise above mediocrity and that too in selections, not as a whole ; and the poets indulge in unrealistic hyperbole in describing the combats fought chiefly between the Muslim warriors and the "Kafir" non-Muslims.

Wahab Pare of Hajin (1845—1914) was a voluminous writer of verse, largely translations from Persian. He translated *Akbarnaama* of Hamidullah of Anantnag (Islamabad), and *cahaar Dervesh, Bahraam Gor* and *Sultaani* and, the chief of them, Firdausi's *Shahnama*. He also translated *Naunihaal-i Gulbadan*, a love romance, from Urdu. Among his original compositions are *Haft Qisa-i Makri zan, Haft Qisa- i Ami*, and *Devani--Wahab*, comprising his ghazals and poems. He is the poet of Razmia (combat) masnavi s in Kashmiri ; and his *Shahnaama* alone, in four volumes, consists of 23,491 verses, the first three volumes being a close translation of Firdausi, the fourth more of, what may be called, a *Khilafatnaama*, describing the conquests of Islam. His *Sultaani* in 11,753 verses, is a translation in three volumes ofKashmiri verse of several Persian originals which are biographical descriptions of Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom's life and ministry. He also wrote a poem descriptive of the features of the Holy prophet in 336 verses ; a masnavi on floods, entitled *Sahlaabnaama*, describing the devastation and sorrow they brought to the land ; *Be'boojnaama*, a masnavi on the chaotic conditions of the time ; and *Derveshi*, a masnavi on the contemporary saints, fakirs, and men of learing. Wahab's com-

positions, particularly his *Devani-Wahab*, show a mastery of technique in 781 ghazals and poems with 20 different *radifs*, end-rhymes. He has portrayed for us the social changes that came about in his time when "coats and trousers, zenana caps and brown shoes, shikaras and houseboats" came into vogue. He has also given us some telling descriptions of wrestling bouts and tournaments, their fury and clangour, as, for instance, when Sohrab and Rustum fight.

> They enter the lists with quivering spears,
> fighting hard and quick.
> Their lances smashed into smithereens,
> they fight with cruel steel.
> Their thirst slaked with plenty of blood,
> their swords pierce not their flesh.
> Then going to war with giant maces,
> they hammer each other's head.

We notice a didactic strain in his ghazals and poems; they even allude to the misery around him. His love songs lack joy, but sometimes he could turn out simple and sweet verses as in his pretty poem on Youth.

> When I was young, thou didst make
> mountains glitter like gold:
> Now I am old, and they
> are only rock and stone.
> Only, the other day, it was
> a mighty hill torrent,
> driving along boulders on its way.
> But soon the flood is gone
> and the dry bed raises clouds of dust.

Another masnavi writer of the time is Pir Mohi-ud-din Miskin (d. 1915 c.) of Kwalagom tehsil. He is the author of *Zebaa Nigaar*, Laila Majnoon, *Sohni Mahivaal*, *Heer Ranjha*,

and *Chandarbadan*, besides a body of ghazals. His ghazals speak mostly of sorrow, separation and despair and lack passion and distinction. His masnavis are better; and it is noteworthy that the Kashmiri poet turns now to themes popular in the neighbouring province of the Punjab like those of Sohni Mahivaal, Heer Ranjha and Chanderbadan. Persian now ceases to be the almost only source of literary themes. This is seen also in the verse translation of Urdu *Mussadas-i-Hali* by Abdul Gafar Farigh (d.1925), who also wrote satires and didactic poems against the evil customs of the day.

A greater masnavi poet was Pir Aziz·ullah Haqqani (1854—1928). He was a much travelled man and had visited not only the North West Frontier Province, Punjab, Delhi and Bombay but also Ladakh and Yarkand in Sinkiang. He is a rare combination of a practising sufi and a poet of love metrical romances, like *Jauhar-i-Ishq*, the love story of Jahandar Shah and Bahravar Banu; *Qisa-i-Mumtaz-o Benazir*, *Guldasta-i-Benazir*, which narrates the love romance of Munir; and several others. He also wrote other masnavis like *Jang-i Iraq*, *Rozatul Shuhuda*, and *Qisa-i Dushnaan*. Haqqani was a prolific writer and wrote numerons ghazals, mystical and on love, and several occasional poems like *Sahlaabnaama* (The story of the Flood), *Aatishnaama* (The Story of the Fire), *Bahaar-naama* (The Description of the Spring) and *Derveshnaama*, and amusing satire on the self-styled derveshes of the day; and the like. His masnavis and poems are overburdened with Persian diction and sentence construction, but Persion seems to come to him naturally and the narrative is therefore not laboured. He has drawn a picture of the bad times, the distress caused by flood, fire and famine, in his occasional poems and there is a satiric vein in them His ghazals are good though written in the traditional style, the same old metres and stock imagery, epithet and artifice; but there is a note of romantic passion

and sometimes a distinction of memorable phrase. For instance ghazals beginning

1. sitamgar turk-i mastaanay...
2. zaan 'ashqu'ny chana aasaanu'y...
3. haa yaara sitamgaara, vuchto ba kate lo...
4. 'ashqu' da'ry-yaavas yima kama graaye...

He is perhaps more distinctive when he writes in the sufi vein as in the ghazal beginning

5. roshi tul pa'ry-yav josh zeerabamu'kuy...

Among the writers of, what may be called, the sacred verse as distinguished from the mystical, the greatest name is that of Abdul Ahad Nadim of Bandapor (1258—1329 Hegira). He wrote about 50 N'ats (eulogiums) on the Holy Prophet, besides Hymns on God, a poem descriptive of the Prophet's person, and *shaharashob*, describing the gross weaknesses of society, its religious leaders, pirs and muftis, and of the people generally. But it in is his N'ats that he is pre-eminent. They are charged with a passionate devotion and reverence and often illumined with striking allusions from the Holy Koran. His diction is simple, and the rhythms appropriate to song, written as they are to the tunes of *Vanavun*, songs sung on festive occasions, particularly wedding songs.

The mystic tradition continues but much that is written is unequal in merit, platitudinous, gloomy and even obscure. There are exceptions, however, in a few poems of Wahab Khaar, Ahmad Bat'awaa'ry and Waza Mahmud. Wahab Khaar of Shaar (1842—1914 c.) was a contemporary of Shams Faqir, and both knew each other well. He wrote many ghazals and songs but in poetic achievement he cannot be classed with Shams Faqir. His poems often lack verbal felicity and suffer from faulty prosody ; and some of them are obscure in mean-

ing. His *daleel* (story) entitled *Tota* (Parrot) is rich in symbolism and has become popular, written as it is in folksong tune.

Waza Mahmud of Nawab Bazaar, Srinagar (1834-1924 c.) has a rare (rare among Sufi poets) mastery of rhyme and metre, and his songs and ghazals are sung even today. He tries new directions but is not always successful except in poems of short metres like the ones beginning

1. haa jaani azeezo...
2. yaari yaarbaash aamay...
3. la'tee kamicee ga'yee gaangal...
4. hoori chakh zaamu'ts swargu'saavu'niye...

Ahmad Bat'awaa'ry (1845-1918) is known for his ghazals and songs but more particularly for the short allegorical poem "Nay" (the Flute), which is rich in mystical symbolism and demands a close study. Of such poems, distinguished for an unusual brevity but depth of meaning, there has been a dearth in Kashmiri.

A word may be said here about the comic-satiric ballads distinguished for homely but effective metaphor and picturesque portrayal of the ridiculous situations in which the Kashmiris found themselves when facing either the natural calamities like floods and earthquakes or the tyranny of the petty bureaucrats of the day, or when they tried to adjust themselves to the new changes introduced in their lives by, for instance, the Revenue Settlement, made for the first time in cash instead of in kind, by Sir Walter Lawrence. Though this kind of comic-satiric verse is minor poetry yet it is a pity that much of it, called *ladi'shah*, is lost, and only stray stanzas are extant. There were, however, a few sustained efforts like that by Mulla Habibullah Hakeem's *Sahlaabnaama* on the great Flood of 1903, which is a humorous poem unalloyed by any reformist indignation with its recurring refrain : "gav kunuy Khanabala Khaadu'ny-yaar" (From Khanabal to Khaadanyaar,

Water, water everywhere) He wrote humorous ghazals like the invocation to God—

Khwadaavandi hand-o vwapalhaakh raa

(Lord God of mushrooms and wild vegetation)—

but some of them border on the indecent and even unprintable, while a few are really amusing like the *Paagal Sakinaama* (The Mad Saki). Sir Aurel Stein's *Hatim's Tales* contains a valuable humorous poem on *Yarkand anon Zenaan* (we shall conquer Yarkand) by Sabir Tilawony, describing how we Kashmiris set about preparing for the conquest of Central Asia, impressing into service potters and cobbler - scavengers and collecting horses from villages which had no bigger animals than fowl.

A brief mention may here be made of two poetic forms no longer practised now. They cannot be dated but may probably belong to an earlier time. One is, as it were, a running commentary in verse telling a story in the narrative style of a *daastaan* of old, a story recited with songs accompanied by dramatic gestures. A popular poem of this kind is *Ziny M'ozoor* (The wood-cutter) by the little known Akbar Lone. It tells the story of the hard life and misfortunes of a wood-cutter and begins with a stanza which is repeated at intervals, at the end of each unit of several stanzas, describing a scene or incident.

bekas ahvaal baavay kas
hay ve'sy da'zmay naaray vas
kyaah kari kaanh laaninis nyaayas
hay ves'y da'zmay naaray vas

The other form is the formal elegy, in rekhta, Persianized, diction, on the Martyrdom of Karbala. A collection of them has been published under the tittle of *O'sh ta Aab* (Lala Rookh Publications). These elegies are usually written in long, slow-moving metres giving them an air of sad solemnnity appro-

priate to them; and they often display learning and rich allusiveness. For instance:

> "Yih boozith haalaah gav Am Salmas
> yak rafa' kara jaaman paaray
> dab divaan aa's pyat'h za'meenas
> rab lada, gom Hussain maaray
> kara Hussain Hussainaah
> paan maaraan gash ho gav tas
> shor khalkav tul yak baaray
> zonuk gat'akaar sapu'num Madeenas
> aj mood Paigambar dubaaray
> hai hai yi banyav kyaah"

Apart from these formal elegies, we have some masnavis on the Karbala theme tike *Gulzaar-i-Hassan* by Ali Ganai Aashaq, *Rozatul Shahuda* by Ghulam Hasan Daar, and *Jangnaam-i Imaam Hanif* by Syed Amir Shah.

The most famous poet of the *Lila* poets of this sub-period is Krishna Razdan of Vanpoh (d. 1925). He has a whole-hearted abandon and light-heartedness as well as a keen sense of the enjoyment of the good things of life as against mere relinquishment of them, of *bhoga* as against *tyaga*. His *lila* songs are free from recondite or obscure mystical allusions; and he draws his allusions and figures of speech from the familiar. The descriptions in his long narrative poem *Siva Parinaya* (The Marriage of Shiva) and the ceremonies of the Heavenly wedding are drawn from those enacted on the earth in Kashmir, and they are couched in the very verse styles in which wedding songs are usually sung here. In the choice of words and the use of them he is unsurpassed and rarely equalled; he has simplicity and ease which never degenerates into baldness and is never ineffective. Indeed, even a common word used by him is illumined with a startling significance by the aptness of use. Instances of his style may be cited in the poems beginning.

1. prabaath ho aav, a'chy mutsu'raay...
   (Get up and look around,
   the morning is come)

2. Nandalal aav gindu'ne raas
   aara ka'ry-ve aaray...
   (Nandala is come to dance,
   make a ring, make a ring)

3. sa'miv karav athavaas
   pa'kiv raas gindane...
   (Come, let us, hand in hand
   enter the ring and join the dance)

IX

Krishna Razdan died in 1925 and Haqqani soon after in 1928, and the Age of Masnavis may be said to have ended. Not that they ceased to be written altogether, but that the fourth period, 1925—1947, saw the rise of other poets who overshadowed the writers of masnavis. The year 1925 may be regarded as a landmark in over recent socio-political history as well. For, in the same year, Maharaja Pratap singh died, bringing to a close, what may be called, the feudal rule in Kashmir. The form of government, already modernised in its administrative set-up, no longer commanded the acquiescence of the people, though it did not come to a sudden end. The people, however, began to show active dissatisfaction with it in this period ; and this dissatisfaction began to be reflected, albeit in a veiled manner, in the literature of the new age, fostered as it was with the nationalist upsurge in the rest of India.

Haji Ilyas (1881-1938) of Tsraar wrote a masnavi entitled Qisa-i *Mamtaaz-o Benazeer* in *bahar-i hazaj* metre. He also wrote *khanjar-i Ishq*, *Makr-i zan*, and ghazals and poems. He is unaffected by the new trends and, by upbringing and temperament, really belongs to an earlier period even in his labour-

ed style and the stock diction of the former age. Muhammad Ismail Nami of Srinagar (d. 1934 c.) wrote Qisa-i *Shirin Khusro* and *Maghaazul Nabi* in the old persianised style. Sat Ram (d. 1934) and Anand Ram (d. 1939), both of village Traal, wrote sufi ghazals also in the old tradition, and hymns in praise of the Holy Prophet of Islam, which are an indication of the spirit of reverence for faiths other than one's own.

There are other traditionalists of the time who deserve a mention. Shams-ud-din Hairat (b.1890—) has, like some others of the time mentioned above, written more Persian than Kashmiri; he has nevertheless written ghazals and poems in Kashmiri as well as a masnavi *R'anaa va Zebaa*, a love romance translated into verse from the Persian prose version of Shams Qahqaha. Daya Ram Ganjoo wrote a considerable body of didactic verse in *gar vya'z maal*, exhorting us to set about reforming our lives and to educate ourselves about the world about us and break our isolation. His diction is remarkably free from the unassimilable Persian which is surprising in one who could turn out Persian verse with as great an ease as Kashmiri verse. Mohi-ud-din Nawaaz Ratanpuri (b. 1926—) writes ghazals in the traditional style, but there is, sometimes, a freshness about them and they strike at a deeper thought; and there is a compactness of expression not usually found in the traditional ghazal. There is also Abdul Qudoos Rasa Javidani (b. 1901—) from Bhadrawah in Jammu Province who writes Kashmiri ghazals and songs which have kept alive the tradition among the Kashmiris settled in the bi-lingual region of Kashtawar and Bhadrawah in the Chenab Valley.

The period may, however, be rightly called the Age of Mahjoor. To Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor (1885—1952) we owe a deep debt for keeping alive Kashmiri poetry at a time when Urdu and English, introduced in the last decades of the nineteeth century, had ousted Persian from Government offices and from its pre-eminent position in schools and when literary

activity was at a low ebb. He began writing Persian and later, took to Urdu, but soon was stirred to writing Kashmiri by the fortunate circumstance of listening to a song sung in chorus by some village belles. His very first song, *poshemati jaanaano* became immensely popular; and thereafter till his death he wrote only in Kashmiri. He became not only the most popular poet of his time but came also to be recognised as representing in himself the renaissance of the new literary urge of the time. In his earlier poems, he bears the influence of Rasul Mir; but his songs are simpler and, sometimes, even sweeter, and he succeeds in using a purer diction. He recovered much of the melody native to his tongue, retrieved it from the false *rekhta* of our masnavi poets, and, what is significant, introduced new themes in which we may discern the modern note. His predecessors had lavished their poetic ingenuity on embellishing the exotic beloved of classical Persian, Leila and Zulaikha, Azra and Shirin, but Mahjoor discovered the faery of Cacausus in a country lass of the Valley :

> Thou Bouquet of the Meadow Flowers,
> Thou Heavenly Heemaal, thou Peri of Qaaf
> Thou Pitcher of Wine, thou Katik Moon,
> O country lass, O sweet, O dear !

Or, in *gulshan watan chu sonuy*, where he sings the praise of the Valley in a simple, direct way, which was in revolutionary contrast with the prevalent style :

> The spring has filled with symphony
> Fountains, brooks and hill-streams,
> Rills and waterfalls.
> To fields, hills and open wolds,
> To hollows, glens and meads—
> What glow imparts the bloom !

Mahjoor was truly a representative poet of his age. Throughout his life, sometimes in a veiled manner no doubt,

his ghazals and *geet* mirror the new stirrings of the time, as in—

1. be'zabaan chini ye'ti zinda rozaan (*Maaramati...*)
2. pooshivaare myaani andar vaa'ty vaarily pa'sh
   ta braa'ry (*Baagvaana Miharbaanaa..*)
3. shinyaah caa'ny na saa'rozan shinyaa
   shinayan andar basi no'v dunyaa(*Na'v Kasheer*)
4. pay boz lay thav zamaanas suu'ty
5. gat'a tsa'j gaash aav gaah trov laalan
   sangarmaalan pyav praagaash

(1. The tongue-tied cannot be said to be truly alive.
2. In my garden have come the birds of prey,
   and beasts and cats...
3. Your gardens will not long remain desolate,
   soon there will be a new world here.
4. This secret learn : keep abreast of the times.
5. The darkness is fled, the dawn is come,
   the tulip shines bright, and
   the mountain tops are all aglow.)

In 1938 which was a turning-point in the struggle for freedom in Kashmir, Mahjoor sounded the clarion call to his countrymen in Kashmir :

> vwalo haa baagvaano nav bahaaruk shaan paida kar
> (Come Gardener, we will create
> the glory of a new spring)

But when frustration and disenchantment came to sensitive men and women soon after freedom, he poured withering scorn in the poems of his last days, in aazaa'dee (freedom) ; *laalo. laalo, haa guli-alalo*, and in *poshinoolo hoshisaan roz.*

Freedom is a houri of paradise
and may not roam about with all and sundry ;
that is why she is flirting only with
men of her choice, in mansions of the few.

Elsewhere in India, the upsurge of nationalism might sometime look back to the past and produce revivalist literature but in Kashmir the poets looked ahead, notably Abdul Ahad Azad, who died at a young age on April 19, 1948. He wrote love songs and ghazals but came under the influence of radical socialist ideas and made a definite break with the past. Says he

1, afsaana judaa saaz tay saamaana judaa myon
maykhaana judaa sheesha tay paimaana judaa myon
(My theme, my song and music are different,
my tavern, flask and wine-cup are different)

2. zindagee kyaah inqalaaban h'unz kitaab
(What is life but a book of change
and revolution)

3. poozah che' kunyar lol ta insaaf nimaazah
na ta Id be'yi dashahaar ta nav roz tanaazaah
(True *puja* is unity and true *nimaaz* love and justice;
otherwise 'Id, Dussehra and New Year Day
are all noisy wranglings.)

He is a poet of universal sympathies, of humanism, uninhibited by difference of colour and creed, and of the under-dog and all-round revolution.

Your God is the God of mosques and temples
My God is the God of unity and love

or, Soon the day will come
when the storm will rage, bringing down the tyrants,
and vindicate the blood of the down-trodden...
Your so-called friends are clever conjurors
who win the bet and for you keep on show
the k'aba and the idol-house.

or, Proclaim to all the Kashmiris
what thou hast confided unto me :
cast out the frivolities of *kufr* and *deen*,
for the light of the candle is for all...
My *deen*, my *dharma* is fraternity.

Azad wrote *Shikwa-i Iblees*, which was a new thing. It was, firstly, a *nazm*, a poem much longer than the ghazal, though written in ghazal *radif* (end-rhymes), with a unity of theme, and, secondly, the theme was boldly revolutionary, questioning God's sense of fairness and His wisdom in creating man and his world. It begins

Long ages passed since you expelled me from
Ḥeaven where I refused to make obeisance
to man. It was a pretext found by you
to stab me in the back. I was, you full
well knew, loyal to you. My only sin
was self-respect. Was justice meted out
to me ? Was it God-like to condemn me
eternally to Hell ? You did not wait
to hear me speak in self-defence, to know
how I, who knew no other glory but
yours, could bow to newly-created man...
Have you been fair to man whom you have made
from dust, fragile and weak ; whom you have sent
to fight against the mightly Satan ? You
should have killed him outright so that this pother
of *kufr* and *deen*, of Heaven and Hell, should not
have been ? Or, do the fright of Hell and horror
of judgement day operate thy world ?

There were other poets, much younger, who took to writing verse in the late thirties. Ghulam Hasan Beg Arif (b. 1910—) wrote poems on themes like "the Kashmiri Craftsman" which complains of the capitalist exploitation of the

handicraftsmen of Kashmir and on "Our Caravan" which, in spite of the cruel wolf following it, forges ahead, steady and sure.

"magar kaaravaan son bronh bronh pakaan gav..."

Ghulam Ahmad Fazil (b. 1914) and Nandalal Ambardar (b. 1915—) also took up new themes like the "Kraala Koor" (The Potters Daughter) and "Kana Door" (The Ear-rings) respectively. Both excel in description which though passionately romantic, is yet free from the sterile stock diction. The best work of all the three poets belongs, however, to the present period which begins from 1947.

An eminent poet of the time is Zinda Kaul (1884—1965) who, till almost 1940, wrote only occasionally and that too mostly in Persian, Urdu and later, in Hindi. It is Zinda Kaul that sounds the modern note in a profounder sense than any of his predecessors. For, among all the mystical poets, past and present, he alone was familiar with modern thought, its doubt and interrogation, which calls into question the social and religious certitudes that were once the unquestioned moral support and basis of stability for society. In a satiric vein, in *a'zyuk gaat'ajaar*, he contrasts the old wisdom with the knowledge of today. Today, the universe is a limitless ocean of atoms in which struggle is life and stillness death. Therefore life consists of clash and competition, and those who will not kill must themselves get killed.

Christ (they say) promises paradise
to the hungry pious ;
It must indeed a fine place be,
but does it exist ?

But there is an over-riding and self-certifying testimony on one's heart :

People ask : "Has he a heart ?

why complain to Him,
why waste one's breath like wind ?"
But the heart replies, "why heed
what others say ?
Can you forget that I exist ? "

Zinda Kaul has given to Kashmiri verse some new rhyme-patterns and stanza forms, both regular and irregular ; and he has succeeded in freeing it from the initative forms prevalent till his day. He has given us memorable pictures of an aspirant's yearning for God and of God for man. How can we, so may we object, face God after many slips and falls and goings astray. But says the poet :

But these pretexts will not avail
to turn away from Him ;
For, we may turn away from Him ;
but will he let us go ?

There is a profound meditative quality in his poetry ; and in a few poems, like *Vadihe Manush*, *Naatayaa'ree Joogy*, and *Lolas kun*, there is the quality of vision as in *Vanan Manz Laal* where the lover has a priceless vision of

a mystic afflatus passing from heart to heart,
where fleshly eyes of man intervene not
between true lovers. The love-sick heart hath heard
of God but here it sees none other than man...

Lachman Razdan of Haanad Tsavalgam near Kwalagom is a class by himself. He tried to write serious verse, and indeed wrote a few lila songs and *bhajans*, but failed and gave up making the effort. He is superb in his satiric verse, which came to him naturally. There are only a few things in Kashmiri in this genre as good as almost all that he has written though, and inevitably, he sometimes transgresses the limits of decorum. His satires *Tota Gudrıny Caay* (Tea at Tota

Ram's House at Gudar), Ve'shivi Khandar (The Wedding of the Vishav), or the satire on the marriage of his own friend, Sarvanand Mazkoory and, above all, *Lala Lachman Shakhdaare draav*—have all grown famous. He can turn out telling memorable phrases, employing colloquial idiom and racy diction. The last poem begins effectively :

> It was the twelfth day of the dark fortnight,
> the moon was in the Taurus and it was
> a saturday to boot when Laala and
> Lachman set out. on this ill-omened day,
> to handle a job they had not learnt before...

Thereafter he became known as Lala Lachman. He also lived on till after 1947, but his best work was done in this period where he truly belongs.

Before this survey comes to a close, mention must be made of two sufi poets, Samad Mir and Abdul Ahad Zargar. They continued the tradition of mystical poetry and may perhaps be regarded as the last, but certainly not among the least, of the mystic poets. Both of them have earned a secure place not only as practising mystics whose verse is read and recited with respect due to saintly men but also as poets. And both of them have been rather prolific for poets of this genre.

Samad Mir (died January 9, 1959) of Nambal Haar, Badgom, was illiterate and eked out his living as a labourer. He was born at Narwara, Srinagar, where his father had moved from his village to work and live ; and it was as late as in about 1920 that he returned to his father's village where he lived to the end of his days. It is remarkable therefore that he should have written poetry which has distinction and also depth of meaning, though one may detect. at places faults of technique in his verse. Mystical experience, inevitably, finds only a *near* expression, inadequate and incomplete, and that too only in symbol and metaphor. These symbols and metaphors are apt to become stock diction and, by oft-repeated use, stale and

lifeless But, in several poems of Samad Mir, as of Ahad Zargar, it is refreshing to find new symbols chosen from unexpected sources as, for instance, Samad Mır's

1. korkaci tshaala niyi pe'tsid'aaran
2. guhreenzis khabar chay chu kyaah zwan
3. shaahpaa'zas shumaar chaa shikaaran
4. peentsu'kaan'y mwaku'dam che' kwalu'taaran
5. nilu'kreesh chaa lagaan totu'kaaran
6. loguth phal grat'as tshal carkh maaran
   aabas ta khaari chuy manzu' ma'nzy-laah
   shoku'ki ta'ha ta'ha la'j grat'as daaran
   paan sara kar ma'rith maaran kyaah

   ranga ranga baana thury kraala kumhaaran
   kenh draay sanga saa'vy kentsan chu graah
   kenh khaa'ly lolan kenh zaa'ly naaran
   paan sara kar ma'rith maaran kyaah

7. so'draas gatshaan chi laaran
8. kaavan cho'kum yi kwangaposh
9. pay boz layi suu'ty day athi aav
10. shaal chuy gwaphi manz caal haavaan

It must be said, however, that Samad Mir is not as clear and simple in many of his poems ; and indeed, he (as well as Ahad Zargar) can be very obscure at places, and not always with good reason.

Samad Mir, and again Ahad Zargar, share with their predecessor mystic poets another characteristic. They are not only convinced that all paths strive to reach the same goal but are familiar with, and put to good use, their conviction and knowledge of Hindu spiritual disciplines.

tsali yas shak du'y tsakh ta shubhoo
Raam Raheem tas yaksaan choo
gali yas mani duy bani saadhoo...
raayi badu' nishi kar traahi Bhagawan
pwany paap traa'vith boz yaksaan
vo'n Samad Miran shastu'r hyoo
paru *Om Soo*, paru *Om Soo*

Some of his popular poems are *ve'traavun pyom, bazmas tsaas khastay haal, satan hund vanavun, gay paanas pana mushtaaq,* and *tana chas lalavan naar.*

Both Samad Mir and Ahad Zargar, his younger contemporary, also wrote *Akanandun*, an Abraham Isaac kind of story of indigenous origin, popular in Kashmir. Ahad Zargar (born c. 1908) is still with us and is even a more prolific writer. He uses forceful imagery, sometimes of horror type, to bring home to us how a person who takes to the mystic path has to cast aside the worldly values made respectable by social convention. Even when alive (says he) such a one has to seek the company of the dead, he has to commit patricide and even incest—

"yas zaakh ta'sy suu'ty vaa'sil ban"—

he has to cut into pieces his own off spring :

"gani kar panu'nis avlaadas"

And, says he, he has conveyed his meaning in symbolic language— "vo'n Ahad Zargaran ghazal rangmaar"— just as Samad Mir had said that his words carried a different meaning,

"kathu'nu'y myaanyan maane byo'nuy."

Ahad Zargar is also obscure at many places ; but, unlike Samad Mir, he is technically faultless in his verse, and more romantic. Some of his poems which are well known may be named here : *ka'fir saapu'dith ko'rum yakraar, Shiva tapasu'y pru'tshaam,*

seer parzanaav, aki nwakta gatsh bedaar, fakiras kyaa athi aav, rinda ban zindagi sara kartan, suy me' dilas kaan, su chu mudaa myon. He also insists, like his Sufi precursors, that

1. Raam meli beshak Raheemas suu'ty,

and 2. O.nu'kee aalav dity me' har shaayo,

or 3. na chu tor ka'lyma na chu Raam Raam,
na chu millat-o mazhab sahan—

1. (Without doubt Ram and Rahim will unite.
2. Everywhere did I call out to Him
by the name of Om.
3. Neither *Kalma* nor *Ram* is there,
no schisms of religion or creed)—

quite in the tradition, which however is dying fast. Perhaps Ahad Zargar is the very last of them all.

Beginnings of Prose

As in all other languages, prose in Kashmiri came much later than poetry, and for the same reasons. Kashmiri has a continuous tradition of poetry from about the 13th-14th centuries ; but prose had its beginnings only about the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In the ancient times, poets and men of letters wrote poetry, drama and prose of various kinds in Sanskrit, and their contribution has been remarkable not only in philosophy and religion but also in poetics, grammar, rhetorics and prose tales like *Kathasaritasagara*. When during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Persian became the court language, it established itself as the language of the elite, and talented Kashmiris turned to it for giving expression to their thoughts and feelings and even to their day-to-day business. Maulana Sheikh Yaqub Sarfi Ganayi (1522-1594) produced his encyclopaedic work during this time ; and to this time belong also Mirza Akmal-ud-din Kamil (1641—1718), the author of *Bahar-ul-Irfan*, a Persian masnavi of 80,000 couplets, and Khwaja Habibullah Navshehri (1555— 617), who wrote poems and treatises on mysticism, even when he and Akmal-ud-din wrote poems in Kashmiri also. They were followed by other writers in poetry as well as in prose, both Muslims and Hindus; and we find that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Persian was not only the language of State administration and office record but also that of private correspondence. Throughout this period we find that Kashmiri is the language of folklore, kept alive only by oral tradition ; of verse sayings (*vaakh* or *shrukh*) and songs and airs set to music, mostly anonymous, or of the songs (*vatsan* type) sung by our women poets, who did not know Persian ; or of masnavis, ghazals and

songs by the poets of our countryside, who knew Persian well enough but whose contact with the illiterate rural masses was very close. It was these very common people, mostly unlettered, who became an eager audience for their poetry, both narrative and lyrical.

It may be relevant to mention a few facts in regard to the beginnings of prose in Kashmiri. Firstly, during the last quarter of the nineteenth and the earlier decades of the present century, the hold of Persian weakened with the new language, mainly Urdu (and even English which came a little later), being taught in schools along with Persian and, what is more, being made the medium of instruction. It is about this time, when Urdu and English began to be a serious challenge to Persian but had not yet succeeded in relegating it to a position of little importance, if not ousting it altogether, that we notice an effort being made to employ Kashmiri for the functions for which prose is used in modern languages, the functions, namely, of information and knowledge as well as of literature. Secondly, this was the time when the modern Indian languages of the north and the north-west were being increasingly accepted as the real languages of the people and used as media of instruction in the early stages of schooling. Scholars were everywhere engaged in discovering whatever was there of value in these languages and in making them a vehicle for literary expression. English gave a powerful stimulus to this re-awakening or renaissance throughout India which, however, came much later to the then Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sindh and the Jammu and Kashmir State than it had come, say, to Bengali, Hindi and Urdu in the north. Thirdly, that even when the influence of Persian began to diminish, the official language and the medium of instruction of the Jammu and Kashmir State, comprising linguistically different regions of Dogri and Kashmiri, not to speak of Pahari, Dardi, Balti and Bodhi (Ladakhi), came to be not the language spoken by the people, but Urdu. And

fourthly, we must note also the serious handicap from which Kashmiri suffered, viz., the absence of a script adequate to express the many phonemes peculiar to it. It was too late in the day for reviving the old Sharadha script, after the long use of Perso-Arabic alphabet over many centuries, which had ceased to be a familiar script to the vast majority of the Kashmiri speaking people. Perso-Arabic script used for Urdu was much more familiar but was, as such, very inadequate for writing Kashmiri though this inadequacy could be largely surmounted in poetry by the mnemonic advantage of verse. It was only after Independence that the first popular Government took steps to rationalize the script for Kashmiri by supplementing the Perso-Arabic script by additional letter-symbols and diacritical marks ; and appointed a Script Committee, consisting of Ghulam Ahmad Ashai, Professor S.K. Toshakhani, Professor J. L. Kaul and Ghulam Hassan Beg for the purpose. The Committee recommended the adoption of Perso-Arabic script, suitably modified, in the Naskh style. In 1955, however, a Revising Committee recommended the Nastaliq style of the script and made certain modifications of the additional letters and marks necessitated by the change over from the Naskh to the Nastaliq style. This was approved by the Government and is in use today.

Kashmiri prose may, for purposes of study, be divided into (a) the period from about 1885 to 1925 ; (b) 1925—1947 ; and (c) from 1947 onwards. Before the beginnings of prose in about the last quarter of the nineteenth century, all that was there of prose was the oral tradition of folktales, of unknown authorship, which were recited by professional story-tellers, *kathaga'ry*. Some of these were recited to Sir Aurel Stein in June and July of 1896, at Mohand Marg, by Hatim Tilawony of Panzil, in the local Sindh Valley, who was a peasant cultivator and professional story-teller. They consisted of tales of various origins, from Iran like *Mahmud of Ghazni* and *The*

Fisherman or *The Story of Yusuf and Zulaikha* ; or of Indian origin like *The Tale of Parrot, The Story of Raja Vikramaditya* or of folk ballads like *The Songs of Lal Malik* or *The Tale of the Farmer's Wife and the Honey Bee.* They were edited by Sir George Grierson and published in London in 1923. Rev. J. Hinton Knowles translated a few of them into English, the second edition of which was published in 1893 also in London. The translator recognizes that while some of these tales are "undoubtedly variants of popular tales current in India and other parts," many of them are purely Kashmiri in origin. Some of them are fairy tales like *Wazirmaal* and *Laalmaal* ; some romantic tales like *Shah Sayaar* ; and some are tales of clever thugs and highwaymen like *Shashman Thug*. Some tales are amusing and describe ludicrous scrapes as in *shabrang* while some tell us of clever persons, ready-witted and resourceful, as in *The Day Thief and the Night Thief* or *A Stupid Husband and the Clever Wife.* There was also a memorable stock of witty sayings and proverbs which were published in 1885, in Calcutta, by Rev. J. Hilton Knowles as *Dictonary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings.*

Besides the collection of folklore, there was the Kashmiri version of the New Testament, printed from type in Sharada character in 1821 and published by the Serampore Missionaries. Similar editions were issued at Serampore of the *Pentateuch* in 1827 and of *Joshua Kings* in 1832. It was not, however, till 1884 that the British and Foreign Bible Society published a version of the New Testament in Persian script. A revised version of the New Testament together with that of the Old Testament was issued in 1899. In 1879 Isvara Kaul had completed a grammar of Kashmiri, in Sanskrit, entitled *Kashmirashabdamrita* which was published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1898 ; and the first book in Kashmiri had been printed on hand-made Kashmiri paper in 1976 in the first printing-press in Kashmir. This was the translation of the first part of Euclid printed by Pandit Mahadev Joo Gigoo

under the name of Pandit Ram Joo Dhar as its author. The chronogram written by Pandit Gigoo reads as

سفتم ایں در بے بہا پے سال
یافت کشمیر زینت تازہ

which gives the Bikrami date as 1933. Here are a few instances from it transliterated in Roman :

"*Line*—ru'kh, gayi zecharaah panaaha ro'st
Straight line—sya'z ru'kh gayi swa ywasa aasi dwan phe'ryan manz mejimu'tsav ru'khav khwata tsho't,
Angle—koonj ; acute angle—tang koonj ; obtuse angle—kho'lkonj ; right angle—so'm koonj.

" b. Pythagoras Theorum

yo'dvay kuni swami koonji tre'koonjalacan lanjan pe't'h yin karna swo'my tso'koonjal ada gatshi aasun tami lanji hund so'm tso'koonjal yus sa'miskoonjas se'di syo'd aasi be'yan dwan lanjan hu'nydyan samyan tso'koonjalan so'm."

It should be interesting to compare this somewhat sophisticated passage, remarkable for its clearness and precision as expository prose, with the much older folktale style of Hatim, given below :—

"*Tota su'nz kath.* dapaan vwastaad, shahar akh gav shahri Iran, tati os paadshaah, ta'mysuy chu naav Bo'hodur Khan, ta'my os ko'rmut baag zanaanan kyut, tath aa's na vath gaa'rzaanas, ta'thy baagas manz gav paa'da fakiraah, nazarbaazav ka'r nazar, kharbardaarav niy khabar, a'mis paadshaahas do'puk fakiraah tsaav baagas manz, boozun paadshaahan, hyo'tun suu'ty wazir, gay tath baagas manz, vuchun ati fakir—

lachi nov chuy har vati binaa
boz vwaphaadaa'ree ankaa
haa fakiro yor kor tsaakho
katikoo chukh katey pe't'hi aakho."

We note that here the verb ordinarily precedes the predicate in an inversion of the normal syntax. The order of words in Kashmiri is subject-verb-object as in English but, for effect, the verb may precede the subject as in *dapaan vwastaad* (says the teacher) or *boozun paadshaahan* (heard the king). In the later sentence we may discern a significant peculiarity of Kashmiri, namely, survival of the older synthetic case, though the declension of the nouns is, in the main, analytic. In this Kashmiri, sentence, there can be no confusion even if the verb precedes the subject because the case is indicated by the synthetic declension "paadshaahan" while the sentence as literally translated into English can cause confusion of meaning for the sufficient reason that case is indicated in English only by the order of words in a sentence We, however, also find declensions which are analytic e. g., *tsaav bagas manz* which could simply be *tsaav bagas* as in *hyo'tun* instead of *ta'my hyo't*. These are short staccato sentences in which Persian words do occur but an attempt is made to assimilate them into the genius of Kashmiri, its phonetic and grammar e. g., *vwastaad*, not *ustaad, zanaanan*, not *zanaana, gaa'r-zaanas* and *nazarbaazav*. But there is prolixity and repetitiveness and involved sentence structure. We may take a passage of the Bible as translated into Kashmiri. We shall find that the sentences are longer, more coherent and the balance and parallelism in the original has been maintained in the translation. Diction approaches the everyday speech and the syntax is not inverted but normal, though it cannot yet get over its halting pace :

"a'kis shekhas aa'sy zu'h ne'civ timav manza do'p lwaku't'y hih maa'lis 'a'y maali, maaluk hissa yih me' vaati tih dih me', ta ta'my dyut timan maal baagrith. lwaku't'y ne'civ ko'r, soruy jama ka'rith, kentsav do'hav pata aki doori mulkuk saphar, ta tati korun panun maal badraa'hi andar kharu'c. ye'li soruy kharu'c ko'run, tath mulkas andar pyav draag, ta

suh lo'g mo'htaaj sapu'nu'ni, tavapati gav....... ta ta'my do'p tas 'a'y ne'civi tsu' chukh hamesha me' suuty, ta yi kentshaah myon chuh, tih chuh con, leekin khwashee karu'ny ta khwash sapu'nun os laazim tikyaazi con yih boy os moodmut, ta vwany gav zinda, rovmut os ta vwany aav athi."

During this period we find that Maulvi Yahaya wrote *Tafsir-i-Koran* and Nur-ud-din Qari, *Misal* on the Islamic traditions. Here is a passage from the *Misal* :

> *Savaal*—zakaat kath chi vanaan.
> *javaab*—zakaat chi vanaan maal paakh karnas ta bebaakh karnas tami hissa nish yus hissa Allah taalahan ta tihu'ndy Ro'sooli Rahmatan (saliallah allayhi vasalam) tath manz panun mukarar ka'rith tho'v.
> *savaal*—su kas khasi
> *javaab*—tas yus aa'ku'l ta baalyag Musalmaan aasi
> *savaal*—yi kar chuh aasaan dyun
> *javaab*—ye'li tath maalas paanas nishi baraabar akh va'rih gatshi."

Here is another quotation from a catechism of the time : "malaa'yikh chi nooraa'nee ha'stee, timan chana yima saani zaa'hiree ca'shmu' vuchith he'kaan, kyoonki tim chi khuda taalaa su'ndy rosool, yene vasaatath yim qavaayi aalman yaa qavaayi insaanan hu'ndi dar amal nek za'ryi chi banaan ta tim chi qavaaneenan pet'h aki rangi haa'kim aasaan."

Prose is still cumbrous of movement, overloaden with stilted ornate Persian diction, removed from the colloquial idiom though enriched with new words.

Thus did Kashmiri prose limp along ; and the writers like the poets of masnavis, did not know how the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri could be indicated. For instance, they would misspell the Kashmiri words even when they could be correctly written in Perso-Arabic alphabet and the word *con*

چون would usually be written as *caano* چانو and *grat'avol* (گرته وول) as *grat'avaalo* ، گرته والو) and پهل as فل
No one made a serious attempt to perfect the script till about the third decade of the present century when Professor S. K. Toshakhani wrote several textbooks in Kashmiri, language readers as well as arithmetic, adapting the Devanagari script with additional diacritical marks, for use in the Women Welfare Schools in the city of Srinagar. It was in 1936 that Professor J. L. Kaul. for the first time. introduced a Kashmiri section in *the Pratap*, the S. P. College Magazine, adapting Perso-Arabic alphabet with suitable modifications, the first student-editors of which were Nandlal Ambardar and Ghulam Ahmad Fazil. As notable examples of Kashmiri prose, however were the first plays written by Nand Lal Kaul such as *Satu'c Ka'hva't'* (The Touchstone of Truth), *Ramun Raj* (The Reign of Sri Rama), *Pa'z Pativrataa* (Savitri), and *Dayi Lol* (Prahlad Bhagat, The Devotee Prahlad). They were adaptations and translations from Hindustani plays ; but they were, all of them, a stage success. Kashmiri prose is, for the first time, used for dramatic dialogue and, often enough, successfully. The diction and the idion is appropriate to the dramatis personae, who make their point with effect. Nand Lal Kaul died young ! and hardly found a successor in his time and indeed, till long after in the fiftees of the century. Here is Act IV, scene I from *Satu'c Ka'hva't'*.

> "tsooryum paa'thu r, gwad'nyuk saang (shumshaan)
> (Taaraa shavas hyath yivaan ta pathar vaalaan)
>
> Taaraa che' vadaan vadaan na'zydeekh yivaan
>
> *Harishchandra* : (Taaraayi kun) tsu' kyaazi chakh paanay kuniy za'ny shav hyath aamu'ts, tse' chuy naa kaanh ti panun ?
>
> *Taaraa* : (vadaan vadaan) karmuk kyaah gav vunun.
>
> *H.*— yi aasi tse' santan (aashcar paa't'hy dwanvu'nee vuchaan)

T.— Hee kaavji, tsu' kyaah chukh a'mis buthi buthi vuchaan, yi osum kunuy santaan, a'mis ka'd'ynam swarphan praan

H.— yemis baalakas kun vuch vuch cham vaa'linj dubu' pheraan, (vwash traa'vith) achaa Bhagvath yesshaa, vwala an swanatoonk, tu' ba' dimay a'mis daah

T.— me' pet'h kar ta dayaa, ba' chas pardeesee, paratsyen'y, swanatuu'nki ro'stuy ditas daah

H.— ti bani na zaanh, me' cham na ti aagyaa

T.— (vadaan) po'tra Roohyta, tsu' roz ye'tee, ba' neray bechni ta anay swanatoonk (nerun hyavaan)

H.— (aashcaras gatshaan) haanh ! yi kyaah chakh vanaan, kus Roohyat, kuhund santaan ?

T.— (vadaan) hay haay, aki samu'yikis tsa'kru'varath raaza sund santaan, suy vunykyanas swanatuu'nki daadi d'olaan

H.— ka'mis raaza sund ?

T.— raaza Harishca'ndrun

H.— (d'yakas tsa'nd' dith) hay hay, yi chaa myon t'ot'h Roohyath, a'my ti he'tsnama bront'hu'y vath (naalamati ra't'ith) po'tra Roohyata yi kyaah ko'rtham ba' kas trovthas, haay Bhagavaana (murtshaa yivaan) raa'nee Taaraa paanay aamu'ts a'mis hyath, yi ti chaa caa'nee ye'tshaa ? hee raa'nee Taaraa, kath pet'h shookh karun, yus zagtas manz aav tas chu avash marun, yi chi saa'riy muh maayaa, kus son ne'cuv, kasu'ndy a'sy maataa pe'taa, yi chu canduk dana, garaa caa'nis candas garaa myaa'nis, dana chu na nashaan, canda badlaavaan, Roohyath na mood ta na mari, akh vastu'r trovun ta byaakh provun, dih chu sadaa asaar, tsu' kar vaara manas ve'tsaar, sathv'y che' yath na zaanh yiyi ve'kaar

vwany gatsh tsu' ta an swana'toonk, ba'kara teetis kaalas tsyantaa khara."

In 1940 was issued the first journal in Kashmiri, a weekly, by Muhammad Amin (Ibn-i Mahjoor) which was enthusiastically welcomed by the political leaders of the day like Sheikh Muhammad Abdulla, and appeared to have fulfilled a felt want. It was, appropriately named *Gaash* (Light), and published not only the current news but also the poems of Mahjoor and a column entitled *asun ta gindun* (Laugh Awhile). Thus was born, what may be called, original prose in Kashmiri as against mere translation though the handicap of script continued, the editors using *zer* and *hamza* to indicate the peculiar vowel sounds of Kashmiri.

This is a specimen of its news column :—

"Gaash Va'rih 1, Grand 2,28 Aa'shid 621 Kashmiri= 18 Bhaadoon 1997 Bikrami.

1. Ka'sheeri pyat'ha Lahore taany yiyi aayand'u havaa'yee jahaazan hu'ndi za'ry-yi d'aak nini tu' anu'nu', be'yi aasan look ti yivaan gatshaan havaa'yee jahaazan hu'ndi za'ry-yi, lihazaa chu ami khaa'tru' intizaam yivaan karnu', akh havaa gharu' yiyi pir pancaal kohas pyat'h tu' byaakh yiyi Daamdar vud'ar pyat'h banaavnu', yiman saarnu'y ceezan hund kharc diyi angrez hakoomat, kiraayi assi ka'sheeri pyathu' Lahor taany a'kis savaari paantsaah rwapyi,
2. "Shaali Store Mahkaman khaa'ry daanikis nirkhas aa't'h aanu', vwany chi yivaan tsor rwapyi zu' aanu' khaar ku'nu'nu'

Here is an item from "Asun ta Gindun" column :

a'kis zanaani zaav nethu'r ka'rith tre'yee re'ty ne'cuv. zanaanu' va'tshis—"a'mis kyaah karav naav ?"

khaavand vo'thus—"a'mis karav naav havaa'yee jahaazu'
zanaanu' va'tshu's—ti kyaa zi

Khaavand vo'thus—ami kiny zi a'my ka'd' tre'n ryatan manz navan ryatan hu'nz vath."

The first Kashmiri weekly did not, however, continue long enough to develop any distinction of style, nor even a coherence of the sentence structure.

There were no more serious attempts at writing prose till 1945 when a branch of IPTA was set up in Srinagar under the impulse of the Quit Kashmir movement ; and the late Prem Narh Pardesi, a talented writer of Urdu short stories and plays, tried, fairly successfully, his hand at writing a full-lengh Kashmiri play entitled *Batu'har* (The Food Fight) on the exploitation of peasantry. The play could not be staged because it was immediately banned by the Government. It is a pity that the manuscript could not be found which, it is suspected, has been irretrievrbly lost. Pardesi died a few years later and his death has been undoubtedly a loss to Kashmiri prose literature. He had a nimble wit and a competent grasp of character delineation and dramatic situation.

Then came the Pakistan-sponsored Raid from the north-west, in October 1947 ; and under its powerful impact the Kashmiri writers were stirred into action. They formed themselves into a Cultural Front and wrote poems, plays and features and short stories to recite and stage them before the mass audiences in Srinagar and the countryside at large The play, *Zu' bat'aa tre'* (Two-thirds) was as its name indicates, a call to the peasants to resist the large share of their crops alloted to the landholders ; *Dollar Saheb*, was a satire on the machinations of the Imperialists ; while *Shahid Sherwani* was a play on Sherwani, who was mercilessly killed by the raiders at Baramulla. The two former plays were really the joint work of S. N. Zutshi, Noor Muhammad Roshan, Pushkar Bhan and Pran Kishore, while the third play was the handiwork of

Prem Nath Pardesi with its songs written by Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor. On the 31st of July, 1948, the Radio Kashmir came into being, and started regularly to broadcast not only news but talks and features and radio plays in Kashmiri. The Kashmiri prose had came to stay.

Two other literary events may, however, be noted before we come to the end of the beginnings of Kashmiri prose. First the publication of the literary journal Kwangposh (The Saffron Flower) and, second, the translation of the Indian Constitution into Kashmiri. "The Kwangposh" started publication in the last days of 1949 as the organ of the Kashmir Cultural Congress but owing to financial difficulties, it could not be brought out regularly and had to stop the publication of its first phase in 1952. It fulfilled an urgent need not only as an organ of publicity of the progressive writers but also, and perhaps more so, as a forum for their literary expression. Even more significant is its role for the cultivation of Kashmiri prose. I quote below a short paragraph from the third issue, dated July 1950, which shows a competent advance in handling sentence structure :

"amu'n, aazaa'dee ta jamhooru'c judu'jahad bronh-kun paku'naavu'na khaatru', saamraajiyan hu'nz ma'njim-yaaru'z naakaan banaavu'na khaa'tru', jaa'girdaa'ree nizaam nahaavu'naa'vith za'meen greesy-tyan manz baa'graavu'nu' khaa'tru' ta khe'nu'canu'ky mushkilaat hal karnu' khaa'tru', rozi Qomi Cultural Congress d'ramahan, nazman, mushaa'yran ta numaa'yishan hu'ndi za'ry-yi ta panu'ni risaalu' Kwangposh-ki za'ry-yi panu'nyan lukan bedaar ta munazam karnu'c kooshish karaan. gwad'niki May hund prograam os ami silsiluk gwad'u'nyuk kadam."

From this very issue may be quoted other instances of prose from *Haalav* (Locusts), an adaptation in Kashmiri by Somnath Zutshi of a Tamil story of Rajaratnam and from the short story *Ray* by Dinanath Nadim.

1. "raath aa's aamu'ts syat'haah, poory-kiny he'tsan gagraay gatshni ta kohan ta baalan taam va'tsh thara thara, kaala asmaanan he'tsu' cika dini, zan aa's malaa'ykan seenas dag va'tshmu't kuly ka't'y aa'sy vaavaki zora akh a'kis koory koory atsaan ta naalma'ty karaan, zan aa'sy nabagranyas khotsaan, vuzu'malav ta gagraayav suu'ty os and po'kh maahol kaa'npaan."

2. "kho'shpoor chu kamraazas manz ami kathi kiny syat'haah badnaam zi tati cha' gaash yivunuy anigat'a gatshaan, tswapaa'ry sarsabz baalav suu'ty va'lith gaamaah, zan sabz-pa'ree hu'ndis bar'ythis buthis chu rwakhsaaras pyat'h ro'b go'mut, ati chu taaph ti vwathu'vu'ninu'y khoran aasaan, aaftaab kho't na kho't zi loos, re'tu'kaali ti gav atyuk doh d'aay pahar sa'hlaab, shaayad chu khovur aasnu'kiny kulshporas kho'shpoor naav pyomut, yiho'v vajah chu zi atyuk fasl ti chu saa'ry-su'y alaakas manz koons tu' kam maayi."

We notice here coherence of normal Kashmiri sentence structure, choice of words from everyday speech and precision of meaning, and even descriptive power. Kashmiri prose has begun to stand on its feet and take steps forward.

An interesting example of the state of Kashmiri prose is provided by the translation of the Indian Constitution entrusted to Prithvi Nath Pushp and Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif. They had divided the work between themselves but when the Revising Committee, comprising S. K. Toshkhani, G A. Ashai (later replaced by Ghulam Mohammad, then Registrar University) and J. L. Kaul, read the translation, it revealed the poverty of Kashmiri as regards vocabulary and even a standard pattern of spelling with the result that the two parts did not read as parts of one and the same document. The Revising Committee, including the two translators, had almost to do the job over again to remedy these serious defects and not only have a uniform vocabulary but a uniform spelling

and, what may succinctly be called, a uniform pattern of writing the prose version itself. Here is the first page of the final draft :

Hinduk aa'yeen

Sanz—

asy Hindu'ky lookh chi Hind akh poora yakhtiyaa'ree jamhooree looku'raaj banaavu'nu'c ta atikyan saarinu'y shahriyan—

samaa'jee, yakhtisaa'di ta siyaa'see **Yinsaaph ;**
soncnu'c, baavu'nu'c, patsh thavnu'c,
deen dharmu'c ta day-gaaru'nu'c **Aazaa'dee**
darjic ta moku'c **Baraaba'ree :**

praavu'naavu'nu'c ta timan saarinu'y manz
prath a'kysu'ndi shaanu'c ta Qomu'ki yeeku'tu'c
sath - karu'vu'ny **Baa'y baraadu'ree ;**
bad'aavu'nu'c

sa˘njeedu'gee - saan kal ka'rith
panu'ny aa'yeenu'saaz sabhaayi manz az
kunu'vuhshath ta kunu'vanza'hu'ki shatu'vuhimi
Navambaru' ye'kyaah yath aa'yeenas maanaan,
Qonoonee shaku'l divaan, ta panun banaavaan—"

Thus did Kashmiri prose forge ahead in the beginning to become a viable instrument for the various forms of narrative and descriptive, expository, critical and emotive prose, which came into being soon after 1950.

Kashmiri Lyrics

I

I call these short poems lyrics because they are lyrics, literally. They are the song repertoire of our classical music or sufiana mausiqi and are sung to the accompaniment of

sitaar, saarangi and *saaz,*
dukra and *santoor* ;

or as *chakri* songs of our folk music sung to the accompaniment of

rabaab and *saarangi*
no't and *tumbakhnaa'r*—

musical instruments which we in Kashmir have made peculiarly our own. These lyrics have several forms: *vaakh* (Sanskrt, *vaakyaani*) and *shrukh* (Sanskrt, *sloka*), *lola naghma* and *vatsan* (geet) songs, *lilas* and *na'ts*, (in *vannavun* style) and *ghazals* and, at a later day, lyrical poems in varied metres and rhythms. They all deal with human emotions and are intensely subjective.

2

In oral transmission the earlier songs have assumed different versions from locality to locality and texts have become corrupt. Manuscripts have fared no better. What happened is something as follows: *A* is a lover of song and music and hires the services of a calligraphist to make a copy for him in Perso-Arabic script which, without additional letter-symbols or diacritical marks is very incomplete and even misleading for a language abounding in vowel sounds. Sometime after, *B* wants a copy and engages a copyist who, while transcribing from *A's* copy, drops many dots and lines for he does not care to un-

derstand the text which he may not be able to read for want of any additional marks to denote the phonemes peculiar to Kashmiri. Copying is copying, no moré. Then sometime later, *C* gets the copy of *B* and more mistakes of text creep in and so on from *C* to *D* and *D* to *E*, mistakes increasing with every subsequent copy till one comes by a very corrupt text which may be the tenth or, perhaps, the twentieth copy of the original. Then one has to trace backwards, a hundred or two hundred years, when the earlier copies are extinct or disfigured by time. Patience and curiosity can, however, help; and I have had my moments of joy when in 'vacant moods' I have hit upon, as in a flash, what the original word or phrase should have been. This is accepted after being put to all the relevant tests of rhyme and metre, sound and sense, and the general sweep and impression of the manuscript calligraphy. Such a word or phrase has not unoften illumined a whole song. For instance, in a fine little song, the manuscript and oral tradition agree on a somewhat meaningless phrase which the mausiqi musicians also repeat by rote (here placed within quotation marks):

> as may ve'see myon hyoo kas gav
> yas gav masvali "gwande havaa".

This meaningless phrase has been corrected as

yas gav masvali "go'ndur havaa'y,

which not only gives the phrase a meaning appropriate to the context, but illumines the whole song.

This has been a labour of love for several years; and I may claim to have so tuned myself to these songs, their music, mood and meaning, that I can exercise the right and responsibility of an anthologist. For, it cannot be quite a "dilettante business" for the first anthologist of a language which has a living tradition of song from the fourteenth century to the present day. I cannot however claim that I have omitted nothing

of value, that no "gems" may be discovered which are not included here. For a first anthologist this would be tall claim. What I may claim is this: here are quite a few songs and lyrics of Kashmiri which, notwithstanding the inadequacy of translation, are illustrative of the poetic feeling, sentiment or mood, and beauty of word and phrase of these songs and lyrics.

I have also exercised the anthologist's right of excision, for some of the lyrics and, particularly ghazals, improve by excision of weak verses and stanzas. The unit of translation has been, with a few exceptions, the line, not the stanza ; and I have not attempted translation into verse though I suspect myself of having, at places, caught the rhythm and mood of the original when this could, more or less, be rendered into English. I have kept quite close to the original and have translated faithfully but, I hope, fairly intelligibly. The effect and the flavour of the original has sometimes been retained by a literal translation of the original idiom or conceit e.g., "love *melted* me", "burns of love"i and also by using the very words which occur in the original e.g., the *kaav*, the *kumri* and the *poshinool* (birds) or *sonaposh* and *lad'arposh* (flowers). For me, however, the original is the thing, not the translation.

3

I have loved these songs and confessed my love in public, unashamedly. This (I am ashamed to say) the English-educated Kashmiri does not regard quite respectable to do. That I have not been always laughed at or made to look funny is not altogether others' fault. My love for the Kashmiri's lyric has been (I hope) genuine and intimate. It has sent me wandering up and down and across the valley on many "lyrical" hunts and enjoyable "lyrical" missions, for some of these songs live in the country. But they are not only cowboy songs. Nor are they domestic folk poetry comprising marriage songs and funeral songs

or lytierses or harvest songs, the stuff of which folk songs, as such, are made. We have all these in Kashmiri as well as nonsense nursery rhymes or singing games, beginning with the words.

1. *Astam baare t'hee-re t'havn...*
2. *O'kus b'okus tilwaan tso'kus...*
3. *Zoon maa'j Zoonee angan mangan...*

Nor are these what may be called folk-ballads expressing the Kashmiri's satiric humour; for he can laugh at his own discomfiture.

I have loved these songs for their melody. For the Kashmiri lyric is a thing of music, a very melodious music, with its musical rhymes and ever-recurring refrains, its alliterations and assonances, that come most spontaneously as the very stuff of our language, which has about as many vowels and semi-vowels (matra vowels) as consonants. We have no sonant aspirates and gutterals and harsh consonants are rare. The cleverest Kashmiri verse maker could not make a line as harsh as this, deliberately and for effect, with only Kashmiri words:

"Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack"

Rhymes and refrains help to enshrine these songs in the memory.

They are memorable for quite other reasons also. For many years these songs have relieved the tedium of the life of our women who, mostly unlettered, find in them a sincere echo of their emotion. They give

"......a very echo to the seat
where love is throned".

Like the songs in *braja* tradition it is generally the woman who is the lover and utters her love. Besides, many of

these lyrics are unmistakably the work of women poetesses, Lal Ded, the mystic, Haba Khatoon of song and story, and A'ryni-maal. They have also enlivened the sweated labour employed by *kaarkhaanadars* (proprietors of work-shops), and the artistic toiling of the deft craftsmen of Kashmir.

> "Mark it [the song] Cesario, it is old and plain;
> The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
> And the free maids that weave their thread with bones
> Do use to chant at: it is silly sooth,
> And dallies with the innocence of love"

And the embroiderers, the *pashmina* and *gabba* makers, wood-carvers and papier-machie makers, and the country lads and country lasses do use to chant it. Muslim maids are free in Kashmir as they are nowhere in the north-west of India. Says Mahjur,

> "Singing thou goest in the uplands above
> And the fairies thee applaud;
> Like the *kukil* dove thou cooest...
> "Can *Khoja* women match thee?
> Thou roamest free in flowery meadows;
> *Khoja* women lie confined indoors.
> O country lass, O sweet. O dear!"

These lyrics become memorable to us for we can relate them to actual experience and to places. I have numerous such song-and-place associations and memories. They can re-create for us, in whatever measure, the poet's own background of his experience as no other poetry can do. Persian poetry never did this except, in a second-hand manner, for a few of the upper classes. Urdu has not, at least as yet, taken the place occupied by Persian

in the last century, and it cannot be expected to do much more than what Persian did with its prestige and poetic appeal to the educated few. Meanwhile the educated Kashmiri must go without the intimate revelations of the poetry native to him, which alone could vibrate the strings of his heart with the incantation of its verse, and he must wean himself away from the intimate sympathy which it alone could quicken within him and bind him with the life around. A poor life this.

4

The melody and the rhythm of a poetry make for the "capital difficulty" of translation, perhaps a little more so for Kashmiri poetry. Of late the rhythms of Kashmiri songs have by imitation of the Persian prosody (the only prosody the Kashmiri song writer knows) become very correct but a very inflexible pattern of quantitative metre, notably in the present day *ghazals*. In the older songs of Lal Ded and some others we discern a looseness and a flexibility which does not fit in quite within the precise Persian quantitative metres. Sir George Grierson was right in discerning a tendency of stress being substituted for quantity in the Kashmiri song. It is this stress accent that saves it from monotony, helps the metre to express the subtle rhythms of lyric moods, and accomodates turns, exquisitely musical, which, while the songs are being sung, often occur to the musician or the singer.

We feel a certain peculiar ease in weaving rhymes and rhythms. There is indeed a "nursery rhyme thrill", a certain Hickery-Dickery-Dock pattern of rhythm, which you can hear (as Aldous Huxley heard it) any time, any day, in the streets of Kashmir with which any group of labourer's enliven themselves while they carry heavy loads. Several Englishmen have told me that they can catch and

appreciate the lilt of a Kashmiri song (say a boatman's chanty), more easily than they can do elsewhere in India. Here is what Mary Hallowes caught of the tune of a chanty sung by boatmen punting up their cargo boats, *khocoos*, in the Jhelum :

Swift the current. dark the night,
(Ya—illa', la—illa' !)
Stars above our guide and light
(Kraliar, baliar !)...
All together on the rope,
(Ya Pir—Dust Gir !)
In our sinews lies our hope
(Khaliko, Malik—ko !)

This is not all. When Id is approaching and the Ramadan is about to end in the city or the villages, at the time of harvest or a local festival on an evening when the moon is up on high and "the heavens are bare", the country lasses and the middle-aged dames will come out and divide themselves into groups, and the groups will fall into rows, and the rows will be interlocked in a kind of friends' shoulder or waist lock, which is made by arms outstretched over the shoulders or round the waists of their fellows on either hand till they form a solid interwoven file. Another row is formed likewise at the distance of a few paces, facing the former. Then that swing-like movement of the whole file begins, keeping time to the dance tune of Kashmiri *Ro'hu* or *Ro'v*. Which is like this :

First row advancing and the second row receding :
Come, O fairies, let us dance, let us dance
Second row advancing and the first row receding :
Sheltered from light by mountain peaks, by mountain peaks.
First row : I'll make for Love a gold palanquin, a gold palanquin,

Second row : With pearl fringes and ivory pots, and ivory posts.

First row : And when he arrives, I'll come out to meet him, come out to meet him,

Second row : Accompanied by friends and maids, by friends and maids.

And so on till the moon declines in the west and the peaks are aglow with the rosy dawn.

5

What survives of the Kashmiri lyric when its musical associations and vibrations of rhythm are lost in the process of translation ? It loses the very stamp of poet's experience, its unique mood and moment which integrate music, rhythm and meaning of a poem. If it is a lyric, the very stuff of its experience, its substance or content, may suffer equally with the form. A lyric is a musical utterance of a mood or an emotion and the music cannot be separated from the mood ; and the Kashmiri lyric, with a few exceptions, is not an "intellectual" lyric. But something may yet survive in these translations of mine, indicating this content and mood which, if I were to put it in a word, I would call *lol* (to rhyme with *bole*) a Kashmiri word signifying an untranslatable complex of love, longing and a tugging at the heart, "a longingness—poor mortal longingness" in Walter de La Mare's phrase.

This longing may be for God ; for many Kashmiri lyrics enshrine a striving and a hunger for God. They are mystical as Lal Ded's *vaakh* (verse-sayings) Nund Rishi's *shrukhs*, (Sanskrt : *slokas*) and sufi songs, which in striking imagery and epigrammatic terseness express the yearning, "the dryness of soul and the darkness of spirit, or the edifying and exultant moods, of the spiritual aspirant. Or, they may, in a didactic tone, admonish us or advise us to

t read the straight path and not be led astray by sensual or other temptations ; or they may give us hints about the moral and spiritual disciplines that an aspirant for God-realisation must follow. They inculcate a large-hearted love and human brotherhood irrespective of creed or caste and breathe a spirit of charity of all. There is no vengeance even against one's foe.

> O Thou Hope of the hopeful, show us light
> amid 'the encircling gloom' !
>
> Sow Thou the seed of friendship everywhere,
> slay not our enemies !

6

In about the sixteenth century we have the secular *lo* lyric as against the mystical *vaakh* of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The *vaakh* continue to be written, notably by Rupa Bhawani (1625— 1724) and even later, but their hey-day is over. The *lol* lyric is, in a sense, typically Kashmiri. It is no longer written and the authors of these lyrics are not known though two of the writers of them are undoubtedly women—Haba Khatoon of the sixteenth and A'rynimaal of the eighteenth century. It is as songs sung by musicians that most of them, of unknown authorship have come down to us by word of mouth or oral tradition ; and it is as songs set to music that many of them have been recorded, interspersed among Persian songs and ghazals, in the old manuscripts of *mausiqis* or books of music, with directions of *taal* and *muqaam*.

The *lol* lyrics sing of love in many moods. Love's longing keen, its "smarts and burns" and anguish ; the expectation and the elation of Love's visit ; the long long waiting for Love who does not come and the yearning deepens and so deepens the anguish of separation. The spring is come, almond blossom is everywhere, but he does not come ; and then doubts arise in her mind and there is the questioning and doubting of Love's fidelity. He must be sporting among strangers, her rivals for

his love. For, in these *lol* lyrics, woman is the lover and it is man that is sought after. She is but human and her endurance has a limit and she begins to fling accusations at him, the Perfidious, the Reckless, the Inconstant, the Visitor of a Hundred Homes, the Luxurymad, the Voluptuary. He is faithless and a vowbreaker, "now copper, now bronze."

There are other moods, other nuances of these moods ; but their tone is usually the same : plaintive, wistful, melancholic. It is rarely that we find a whole-hearted abandon to joy, sensuous or supernal. Why should most of our songs lack gaiety and rapture ?

..."Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong,
They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

Is it that we have, till recently, lacked any noble aspiration, any large-hearted hope for many centuries past ? But while these songs express our helplessness and resignation to fate, they do also express our quiet fortitude and our popular philosophy of life and faith in God.

These lyrics have few allusions and fewer ornaments and figures of speech. There are references to Shirin and Farhad, Laila and Majnun, Shekh Sana, and Mansur from Perian, but usually we draw on our own legend and lore, and speak of Bombur and Lolare, Himaal and Naa'graay (lovers famous in legend) or Myna and Golden Oriole and Turtle-dove (birds), or Narcissus, Daffodil, Hyacinth and Colchicum (flowers) and the like. They have directness, simplicity, sometimes naivete, and a tender poignancy of feeling.

Don't be angry, Myna dear,
It's love has smitten me.

or

Say Love, how shall I fill my days
when you are not by me ?

Some of these songs are directly addressed to her love; some are addressed to a girl friend (*vyas*), pleading for her intercession; and some others are put in the third person, addressed to *him* who has deserted her. In the *mausiqis*, books of *sufiana kalaam*, these songs are arranged according to *muqaams* or *raags*; and some of them bear the same name as Hindustani *raags*, like *malhaar*, *Bhairavi*, *janjot'ee*, *aasaavari*, *bihaag*, and some have Irani or Persian names, like *caargaah*, *dugaah*, *navaa*, *nav roz sabaa*. and *raasti faarsee*. These muqaams lay down the time-sequence according to which, like the Hindustani *raags*, they are to be sung during the 24-hour day and night.

Another kind of the Kashmiri lyric is the *lila* lyric There is a whole-hearted abandon, joy and gaiety in them which is unusual in most other Kashmiri songs. They are *bhakti* or devotional songs sung in praise of Personal God mostly Sri Krishna; and they stress love for God and inward experience rather than outward formalism or prescribed ritual and even prefer *bhoga* to *tyaaga*, enjoyment of the good things of life to abstinence and renunciation, quite in the tradition of Kashmir Trika Saivite tradition. Prakash Ram, Paramanand, Lachman Raina Bulbul, and Krishan Razdan are the more famous among the writers of *lila* songs which are written in the geet or *vatsan* form, that is, poems in which the unit of three verses is followed by the same refrain throughout the poem.

Allied to theme in tone of gaiety are some of the N'at (eulogiums) in praise of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (on whom be peace!), particularly those by Abdul Ahad Nadim of Band'apoor which are written in Kashmiri *vanavun* (wedding songs) form though are charged with devotion and reverence.

8.

In about the last days of the eighteenth and early

nineteenth century we have the *ghazal* lyric, that is songs or lyrics written in ghazal form, following the Persian models in their technique. Mahmud Gami (d. 1855) gave Kashmiri its first ghazals. Thenceforth Persian has had a dominating influence on Kashmiri songs and, being a sweet language, many of its words and phrases have been easily assimilated. What one may, however, take exception to is not the borrowing of words which enrich our language but the use of anaemic and worn-out conceit, imagery and insincere hyperbole of the decadent Persian poetry. On rare occasions, however, the Kashmiri poet can strike a genuine spark from the mint of Persian conceit.

In the garden of love the wounds of heart like roses, bloom and sighs rise like cypress.

But Mahmud Gami and his successors, Maqbul Shah, Rasul Mir, Haqqani and others, wrote not only ghazals but also songs in Kashmiri *vatsan* form.

9.

Then about 1925. Mahjoor came on the scene and gave us ghazals and geet (*vatsàn*) on new themes. He was followed by others, notably Abdul Ahad Azad, Nandlal Ambardar, Mohi-ud-din Navaz Ratanpuri, Ghulam Hassan Beg, Abdul Qudus Rasa Javidani of Bhadrawah, some of whom wrote in the traditional vein while some others were stirred by new hopes and aspirations and wrote not only on new themes but experimented with new metres and used new imagery, metaphors and similes, and saw things and events in a new light. They have given us patriotic songs and songs with political or reformist under-current, sometimes declamatory and denunciatory in tone, and sometimes songs of profound personal travail. Zinda Kaul showed the way, sounding the modern note in poem *vadihe manush* (Man Would Weep) which might appropriately

be entitled interrogation, a poem which shows the possibilities of the Kashmiri lyric (or perhaps, the ode) what it can achieve in a diction not divorced from the present day idiom, employing new rhyme-schemes and rhyme patterns, and haunting refrains, an expressive medium, rich in its incantation and imagery, bodying forth the eternal *why* and *wherefore* of things as also the *lol* longing of the human soul :

Is love an idle fancy ?
Is beauty a vain illusive show ?

This surely pointed the way to something beyond the "silly sooth" and the dalliance with "the innocence of love" of the early Kashmiri song and lyric

Hereunder are given a few of the *lol* lyrics, *vatsan* songs and ghazals in translation with the first line of the original in italics with each song.

I. Lol Lyrics

1.

bahaar aav nav bahaar aav

Spring, the new spring !
A happy breeze is blowing
Let sorrows end.
Come, gather violets
and tulips many-hued.
Spring, the new spring !

The jasmine to the white rose says,
"I have grown pale."
The poppy shows its scars,
sonaposh is proud and gay,
the daisy comes and goes,
and comes and goes again,
smiting us with love.

Spring, the new spring!

2.

ranga ranga saa'ry gul aay

Flowers have bloomed in all their hues,
 Love, where are you?
The graceful roses came;
the tuberose and the balsam
 and also *sonappsh*
shone forth from odorous night.
The larkspur and the hyacinth
burst daintily into bloom.
 But where are you?

3

la'j phulay kohdaamu'nu'y

The hillsides are in bloom
and almond blossoms everywhere.

A crow whispered to me,
"Your Love is fled from you
 in beauty's prime,
 when spring is come."
Have I not cause to grieve?
Should he not heed my plaint
when hillside are in bloom
and almond blossoms everywhere?

4

ye'ti pyan varshan ta'ty phal bavantay

When rains come, crops are rich
 and fruits a-plenty;
In spring comes Love, the lord of spring.
The iris and the lily white,
the meadow-saffron too,

will sprout again.

The winter is gone, come Narcissus,
and gather violets
Dandelions and viburnums
have blossomed in the wood,
and Love has come, the lord of spring.

5.

ye'li chum yaavun tsyatas pyavaan

When I remember the days of youth,
I feel like mad.

How true a lover is the bee,
she scans the gardens when in bloom,
and honey sucks and sucks again
till wings fail her and she drops dead.

6.

ya im hoori me' t'oori tsandun mo'loomay

Hardly had I, a budded hourie,
Bathed me in sandal-oil,
when he, my Love, deserted me.

Methought I would
unknown to him,
look out for him,
to deck his crown
with flower wreaths.
But hardly had a flower bloomed
in the garden of my heart,
when he, my Love, deserted me.

7.

twahi maa d'yoot'hvan su hay

Have you not seen him who
hath smitten me with love.

He makes me suffer for his love :
and I am like one whom
frost in winter binds
and heat in summer melts,
and who, for Love, restless runs,
like restless brooks.

I was a backwoods pine,
alone, unknown.
He found me out, my Woodcutter.
and felled me down,
and cut me into logs.
The logs he burnt
and ashes I remain—
my youth and beauty gone.

8.

yas me' ko'rmay dil havaalay

He holds in trust my heart, my love ;
go friend and bring him back to me.
Go plead with him to come and let
me press my body close to his.
I would my head lay at his feet
in surrender absolute.
Go friend and call him back to me.

9.

dil taari ko'rtham dilbaray

Say Love, how shall I fill my days
when you are not by me ?
My heart bursts with yearning keen,
my Love, for you.
The garden of my youth in bloom
invites the Honey-Bee.
He does not come and garden bloom
lies in an idle heap.

I am in the prime of life,
very ripe for love.
O come, enjoy the feast awaiting you.
O joy that will be mine
when you will come!

10

moy con chu so'mbul

Thy tresses are a hyacinth
bewitching one and all;
and when thy tresses are let loose,
their fragrance does attract.
The bulbuls flock and are entrapped.

Thine airs and graces, daggers keen—
they slay the lovers' hearts.
Thy finger-tips, dyed in their blood
are tokens of thy kill.
Thy bough-like arches cusped
set off thine almond eyes.
Thy face, a narcissus in bloom.
All these indubitably make
a very garden of love.

11

lasa kami haavasay

How may I keep alive,
he never thinks of me
nor gives me hope?
The 'Id may come,
how can it come for me?

Tomorrow Ramadhan will end,
but there can be no 'Id
when love is not with me.
Only a lover can
observe the 'Id.

A hidden fire in my heart
burns me in love's oven
to cinder and ashes.
The feast of 'Id—
how can it be for me?

My Love has melted me like snow,
and fretted me like mountain streams,
and restless, as the summer streams,
I restless go.

12

La'j phulay andvanan

The distant meadows are in bloom,
have you not heard my plaint?
Flowers bloom by mountain lakes,
come, let us go to mountain meads.
The lilac blooms in distant woods,
have you not heard my plaint?

13

myaani madan hiyo hiyo

My Love, my Jasmine, my Jasmine,
I long for you.
Come, O come.
I long for you.

I plighted, when young, my troth to you,
why did you break the troth?
O sweet, O deer,
I long for you.

14

yita yita yaaro yito

Come Love, pray come,
I left my home for you.
Will jasmine bloom again?

O come, I may yet live.
Loved One, do hear my plaint;
Time soon will wither me, alas!

15

ho karu'yo ho ho karu'yo

Love, I will sing a lullaby,
I will sing thee a lullaby

My winsome Love, come trippingly
this once to me,
I will fill thee wine cups on cups,
I will sing thee a lullaby

Trailing splendour comest thou,
my Pearl;
I will offer gold ear-rings to thee.
I will sing thee a lullaby.

16

o'h lo'g dara ta kas chakh praaraan

The day lingers,
whom are you waiting for,
voluptuous beauty, youthful maid?

I see you crossing the rivulet,
your smile scattering violets.
I ask nothing of you, but pray:
May thou live long, sweet maid!
May I find favour in your eyes!

17

kaa'viny puu'rith nimu'yo graavo

O Love, lord of my beauty's prime,
I'll be a bird and fly to you
with my sad plaints.
Spring is come and boats are sought
I'll make a love-filled seat for you

at Isle of Gold ;*
and celebrate love's festival,
illuminating gaily-coloured boats,
for you, my Love,
lord of my beauty's prime.

18

me' ka'rymas poshan ḍastay

Bouquets and garlands I have made,
When will the Loved one come to me ?
Pining for him I broke my heart,
When will my Love come unto me ?
Convey my wailings to my love,
and, pray, let him be reconciled.
Conjure him in my name, tell him
I would lay down my life for him.

How tensely drawn are his eyebrows,
which many a missile shoot at me.
I bare my bosom for a shield,
and here a stricken victim lie.

19

daamaana bo'd'um ashi mati

My skirt is drenched with tears,
waiting and yearning my days drag.
I came to meet you in my best,
With ornaments bedecked ;
But I was spurned.
Prithee, why so proud, my Love ?
Why make me a target of pity and scorn ?

20

asimay rosh haa'riye

Why be cross, my Myna dear,

* *Literally,* Sonalanka *in Dal Lake.*

it's love hath smitten me?
you must have heard——
for Shirin's sake, Farhaad
    tore down the hill
for Laila's love, Majnoon
    betook to woods
and pined and died
So why be cross, my Myna dear,
it's love hath smitten me.

21

yi chu duniyaa navikhwata no'vye lo:lo

The world is new, for ever new,
and nothing stays, unchanged for long.
Then dance and play, O maiden dear,
    while youth may last.
The moth wheels round the candle-flame
    and burns itself.
For narcissus the bumble-bee—
    its knows no rest.
For his beloved Lolaree,
Bombur his kingdom lost and life.
For Heemaal's love, the Naga Prince,
    suffered and died.
Then, maiden dear, while there is time,
make of thy youth a wreath of dance.

22

ve'siye gatshtay astay astay

Gently go, and call him, friend,
I have made posies of flowers for him.
I carried him wine over Dara heights,
but he is roaming sylvan glads.

O why is he roaming distant glades?
Where is he drunk with my rival's wine?
Gently go and call him, friend.

23

bahaa'ree phulu'yaa la'j sabzu'zaa'ree

In spring the fields are green again,
but why should friends be late?
The iris blooms on far-off graves,
where friends have gone to sleep,
never to wake.
And here we wait.

24

la'j phulay baadaman

Almond blossoms everywhere,
but where is love?
Hoping he would return to me,
I laid out flower-beds for him.
But he came not.
My daffodils lie withered there.
On whom has he now set his heart
when almond trees are in full bloom?

25

tas ro's madanas me' ti kyaah provuy

What have I gained
if I have gained not love?
My glazed-in balcony
has ivory eaves,
where turtle doves have woven nests
which they fill with their amorous coo.
But he knows not what I pass through.
In vain I gave my heart away.

26

kyaah kara roodam vanu'nu'y pheraan

The spring is here again
    but not for me.
He roams the woods and keeps away.
I was a dove, carefree and gay,
building my nest in the springtime,
when, all at once, the lightning struck,
and lighted up a flame in me.
His locks in curl have whirled me in
    the eddy of love ;
    but he comes not,
nor does my love for him abate.

27.

mati sheen zan galu'yo

    I waste away,
for love has melted me like snow.
    But if you come,
I shall be well again.
I scanned the woods in quest of you,
    Pray come, I may revive.
    Or else,
I shall despair and die.

28

Camu'kaan o'bru'tala vuzu'mala zan draav

He shone like the lightning from the clouds,
and came and went and came and went away.
Like hailstone raining down the rage of skies
he came, and like the storm went thundering by.
And he left me, forlorn, alone,
    to suffer the agony of love.

29

haari tota melinaa haay vanhaa'ree

Will Parrot not to Starling come
and my beloved come to me ?
I have seen Starling pine for love,
and blood-red wound of Poppy's breast.
I have heard Dove's lovelorn note
and known Dove's pallor creep on me.
Will Parrot not to Starling come
and my beloved come to me ?

30

lwaku'caarkis ciku'caavu'su'y

Come, Love, and let us sport awhile.
Youth has lithesome buoyancy
and loves to romp and play.
Youth is a flowering jasamine,
green and supple and full of sap :
Age, a prickly bramble,
dry and brittle and full of thorns.
When autumn sets in, jasamine crimps
and seres and turns to a nest of ants.
Oh ! for the lovely jasamine
that in the very prime of spring
round a prickly bramble twines
Come, Love, and let us sport awhile.

31

baalu'yaar aangan tsaav

Love entered my courtyard
and looked about and went ;
in a moment he was gone.

Were he to come again,
I would complain :
"Why are you so haughty,
why are you so unkind ?
You come but do not stay ;
in a hurry you come
and in haste are gone."

32

pankaza badanas pet'h aas gumay

The beads of sweat on his lotus body
gleam as gleam the stars and the moon.
I would that he were close to me
as is the necklace round my neck,
loth to leave my bosom warm.
I would that I did sport with him,
but he knits his brows at me
and every limb of mine trembles with fear.

33

maaru'matyo lol aamtay lol oyno myon

Come, dear, let us be friends again.
Let us forgive, let us forget,
let us have mutual give and take.
I love you still and long for you,
so do you too.
Then come, let us be friends again.

34

gul pho'ly baagas posh pho'ly vanu'nu'y

O Honey-Bee have you not heard
gardens and meadows are in bloom ?
O Love, have you not heard
sweet maidens no longer feel estranged ?
They have cast out all winter gloom

and look forward to the joys of spring.
They are carding *tosa* wool,
and spinning rainbow-coloured thread.

35

subuh aav tay pho'lyo nooro

The morn is come and the light broadens,
wake up, O sleep-laden Love.
In your soft sleep and happy dreams
peris and houris dance and play,
and offer heavenly drinks to you.
In your reposeful sleep,
beautifully gleam your gold ear-rings,
your pearl pendents and pearl necklace.
But wake up, Love, the light broadens.

36

haa yiyo son yiyo, hiyi phulay la'jiyo

Flowers bloom in father's home
but you come not I feel like one
accursed, alone, and mocked by all.
I battled with my fate and lost ;
and who can fight his fate and win ?
O what had fate in store for me ?
The jasmine blooms in father's home,
but you come not. I wait, in vain.

37

maa'.y a'sy caani asu'vu'ni hwanji

Come, love, and live with me.
Your dimply smile ruffles the heart
and stirs the ripples of restlessness.
I'll furnish my house with carpets bright
and fan you with fragrant basil boughs.
I'll in my bosom make a seat for you

and caress you with love-filled breasts.
The bird of prey swooped on my bough
and fatally clawed my heart.
Come, Love, and live with me.

38

vantay ve'sy lolan gayimay moori

Say, friend, when will fate smile on me
and my love come to me again ?
I've waited long and patiently,
my heart benumbed and empty of hope.

Sweet is the ritual of love :
And I would Love adorn
with jewels and ornaments ;
in henna dye his hands,
anoint him with my fragrant kiss;
and offer wine in gold goblets.

So would the lotus of my heart
bloom in the azure lake of love.
Say, friend, when will fate smile on me ?

39

azlu'lonuy kotaah sa'ryze

Convey these lamentations to my Love :
"How long shall I brood over my fate,
how long endure the agony of love ?
I have nowhere to go except to you,
how long will you deny me sheltering care ?
How can I, Love, live long in misery ?"

40

dil myon hyath kyath kas nishi roodum

He gave me a draught of love's wine and fled
he won my heart and took to another one.

He pledged his troth to me. "I am yours",
said he ;
"I seek none else but you."
He coaxed me and I believed in him
and gave myself to him.
Then he was gone
Yet I love ardently and yearn
for a draught of wine that doth elate..

41

ve'sy bahaar aav gulan

Spring flowers are in bloom,
and bulbuls yearn for love.
The narcissus-eyed maidens too
are looking out for love.
The daffodils have early come
but will soon take to woods.
Come, Love, let us to woods and meads
where daffodils are in bloom.
Weak in body and with tottering steps
I left my home for Maanasbal ;
I found the lake in azure glory
but I found not you.

42

gaah sapdaan traam ta gaah sapdan lway

Now he becomes copper,
now he becomes bronze.
Inconstant he !

He does not keep his vows,
and fickle is.
We should not fall in love
with such as he.

I followed him till I turned grey,
he visits now some other's house—
this visitor of a hundred home.
Perfidious he !

His locks are dark as evening,
as morning bright his face.
But promises he does not keep,
his vows he breaks.
Faithless he !

43

aah nay roodum me' jigras

I have no tears left,
I cannot utter a sigh.
My heart is parched and rent in twain.
See how true and deep was our love,
how silently I suffered all,
breathing not a murmur of complaint ;
and yet you did not keep your faith.
This is the way the world goes,
there is no faith in this faithless world.

44

Padmaani ada'kar yiyam tay

When will he come to me ?
A Padmani am I,
my tears flow fast,
my longing is keen,
my anguish is deep
Can I ever forget ?

Love is a torch-wood flame
burning my inmost bosom with
its fiery leaping tongues.

My sorrows know no end,
my tears know no break.

45

kyaah vanu'yo mali kyaah vanu'yo

Can I tell you, Love, can I ?
Can I tell you what I suffer ?
I have a quarrel with my fate.
Can I tell you, Love, can I ?

In the garden of my heart
hardly had the almond-tree
blossomed when death came
and 'parted me from Love's caress'.
Can I tell you, Love can I ?

Did the apricot tree bloom, tended
and watered by you ?
Did the cherry tree bloom, fondly
caressed by you ?
Did the pear tree blossom
in flambeaux of bloom ?
Can I tell you, Love, can I ?

In the garden of my heart
the plum tree was in the flush of bloom ;
but when you were gone for ever,
a blight befell the bloom of love.
Can I tell you, Love, can I ?

I have given a few too many of these *lol* lyrics* because they are no longer in vogue, except as the repertoire of our classical musicians, the singers of *sufiana kalaam*. For facility of reference the first line of each song in the original is given as the heading.

*Most of these translations are not to be found in my ***Kashmiri Lyrics*** [Rinemisray, Srinagar, 1945] now out of stock.

II. Other Lyrics

There are other lyrics besides the *lol*-lyric. According to subject-matter and mood they may be love songs, sufi songs, *lila*-lyrics, all in the *vatsan* form, and ghazal lyrics, that is lyrics in the ghazal form. A ghazal is not a lyric, strictly speaking, unless it creates a single, unified impression. The *vatsan* song is longer than the *lol*-lyric and contains several 4-line stanzas, the last line of each stanza being the refrain (*vooj*). The *vatsan* form is also used in *vanavun* (wedding songs) and *lad'ishah* (folk ballads) and, in a slightly modified form, in *ro'v* (dance) songs. This kind of song was most probably brought into vogue by Haba Khatoon and, after her, by A'rnimal, and some of their *vatsan* songs are given in translation in Chapter 11. A few translations from other poets' love songs (*vatsan* form), *ro'v* songs, sufi songs and *lila* lyrics as well as of ghazal lyrics are given here. The ghazals are indicated by their first lines and the other songs by their refrain in the original.

Love Songs (Vatsan)

me' no maay mashee zaanh

Can I ever forget thee, Love ?
Thy presence fills my warm bosom,
and turns my body to a frying-pan
which fries my heart,
I burn at the stake of love,
yet utter not a sigh.
Can I ever forget ?

Can I ever forget thee, Love ?
Thy tresses serpentine have bitten me
with sharp-toothed fangs.
My body smarts with the sting of love.
Can I ever forget ?

Can I ever forget thee, Love ?

Thy missiles unerringly aim :
Thy brows do countless arrows shoot
and pierce my heart with pointed shafts.

Can I ever forget ?

Can I ever forget thee, Love ?
Thee I desire with heart and soul,
and pray for thy long life.
But death comes soon
and we must part.
Must my desire bear no fruit ?
Must my love barren be ?
And we live our lives in vain ?
Can I ever forget ?

—Mahmud Gami (d. 1855)

b. Vatson (Songs)

I

a'sy aay laaraan lola suu'tee lo la'tee lo

We have hastened out of love of thee,
O my beloved, O !
The lovelorn still do follow thee,
O my beloved, O
I would make suit to thee, O stay,
and pray, listen to my suit ;
do not wear out the wayworn, Love.
O my beloved, O
Thy lovers, weary and worn out,
have fallen by the way ;
do not wake up the sleep-laden,
O my beloved, O !
On either side thy basil locks,
thy luscious tuberose,

how thy become thy graceful back :
O my beloved, O !
Thy gazelle eyes so many have killed,
thy magic eyes enthral,
the deer have fled to woods for shame,
O my beloved, O !
I scanned thy hyacinth garden well,
spending days together,
the flame of love was lit in me,
O my beloved O !

2

me' hiyi poshan maala karyam caani lolare

I threaded fragrant jasmine wreaths,
My Love, for thee.
I wear gold bangles, jingling sweet,
My Love, for thee.
The 'Id is come, where wilt thou go
for pleasures new ?
O stay awhile, I kept the fasts
My Love, for thee
For thee I waited many nights,
and pined away.
At rosy dawn prayers I said,
My Love for thee.

—*Rasul Mir* (d. 1870)

gruu'sykoory naazneen swanda'ry-ye

Thou Bouquet of the woodlands flowery,
O country lass, O sweet, O dear !
Thou Heaven's Heemaal, thou peri of Qaaf...
O country lass, O sweet, O dear !

Thou flowering creeper of the open wolds,

who can have filled thy buds with fragrance keen?
who has bestowed on thee thy colours gay ?...

Thy clothes are plain, O lovely lass !
They have no lace nor frill of gold.
Thy wayward locks of hair are like
dark clouds that veil the *Katik* moon...

Singing thou goest to the uplands above,
sweetly singing like the lark,
and seeing fairies thee applaud...

How can the *Khoja* women equal thee ?
Thou roamest free wherever you may.
with woodland flowers thou dost sport
while *Khoja* women lie indoors...

Thy looks bespeak thy modesty
thy sense of honour is thy strength,
thy bashfulness wins thee applause...

Thy sleeves rolled up, I have beheld
thee working in the paddy fields
weeding and singing amorous songs...

Thy brows bejewelled with beads of sweat
play havoc with our hearts.
Thou Pitcher of Wine, I fear me, thou
scatterest my wits away...

Be fast in faith, O charming rose,
and let not langour or pride of charms
make thee fritter thy youth away,
O country lass, O sweet, O dear !

—Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor.
(1885-1952)

masvalan kity door hyath draamut ba'chus baazaa'riye

I have ear-rings to sell,
some red, some blue, some pink ;
let Love and Beauty meet
to make the most of life.
Come buy, come buy, come buy.

I have ear-rings to sell,
precious, pretty and fine ;
beneath the flowing locks
they shine as jewels shine.
Come as quick as the larks
round fragrant basil flock.
They cost a winsome smile,
come buy, come buy, come buy.

I bought them from love's mart
in beauty's bazaar to sell.
In their prime of youth
let maidens flock to buy
these lovely ear-rings.
Come buy come buy come buy.

They are Love's offerings,
they are for lovely maids,
they have a mighty charm,
they lure the lover's hearts.
Come buy, come buy, come buy.

Make haste to buy ear-rings,
this is the time to buy ;
this is the time to love.
Soon autumn will set in
when flowers fade away
and love is soon forgot.
Come buy, come buy, come buy.

—Nand Lal Ambardar (b. 1915)

vo'num aaran ba'chus laaran

The hill stream goes asinging :
"I come dashing along
to find my haven of peace
while I am young and strong,
for youth will not endure.

"I gush forth from my source,
my flow doth not abate,
I feel a zest for life,
life urges me on and on.

I splash along the way,
I strike the rocks, I bleed,
I do not rest, I strive,
Vigilance knows no rest.

"I am yet young and wild,
I fret and fume and roar ;
it is the silent deep
that bears the priceless pearl.

"In the ocean vast,
one finds the haven of peace."
This is what Arif says,
these are his precious gems.

—Ghulam Hassan Beg Arif

c (Ro'v Song)

parda ta'ly jalva dyut maashokantay, maashokantay

Love's splendour shines beneath the veil,
beneath the veil.
We were destined to be one, *to be one* ;
which rival has estranged us, *estranged us* ?
O reconcile him to me, *reconcile him to me* !

Make him a gift of all my gold, *all my gold.*
No rival must keep him away, *keep him away* ;
For Love I pined away my youth,
away my youth.
That Thief of love robbed my heart,
robbed my heart ;
At single blow my heart he snatched,
my heart he snatched.
The gust of love blows me about,
blows me about,
Like autumn leaves I flutter down,
I flutter down.
Maqbul lays bare his heart, *lays bare his heart* ;
Every limb of his doth smart with love,
doth smart with love.

—Maqbul Shah

d. (Ghazals)

Come gardener, we will create
splendour of the new spring.
Let roses bloom again,
and bulbuls sing of love again.

The garden in ruins,
the dew in tears,
the rose in tattered leaf—
let us rekindle life anew
in roses and bulbuls.

See, nettles are growing rank in the garden
and hamper the growth of roses,
Let's weed them out, for look ! how hyacinths
are crowding at the gate.
O bulbul, wailings are in vain ;
whoever will set thee free ?

Thine own salvation thou must work
with thine own hands alone.

Birds of the gardens sing their songs
but each one strikes a different note.
Harmonize, O God, their diverse notes
into one rousing song :

Wouldst then arouse this habitat
of roses and bulbuls,
bring thunder, storm and tempest wild
yea, an earthquake.

—Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor

baa'lee su hay chu bevafaa

Faithless is he, what can my love avail ?
His ardour is abating, my lamentations are in vain.

He whose heart is afire, how can he tell his love?
But I shall cry and slay myself: can he stop me ?

The new-born rose and hyacinth demand a nice tending ;
In summer heat and winter frost, what cares the Himalayan spruce ?

I will go forth, my bosom bared, prepared to die
what care I how tensely Love draws his bow ?

The morning breeze is restless but flowers are asleep ;
All vain my restlessness if there is no response.

Azaad aflame with the fever of love, all day and night,
God knows, what he may do out of despair.

—Abdul Ahad Azaad.

vaav yo'dvay sontkaaluk aasi naaras kyaah kare

The flowering spring comes mockingly to her
whose heart for want of Love's caress is dead.

The spring may blow the balmy breeze yet it
will only fan the flame in a heart afire.
She who in vain awaits her lord's return
and pining drowns her eyes in tears,
how can she wish to see the garden bloom ?
How can she wish to watch the fountains play ?

Philosophers stone turns all things into gold,
but what availeth it to her whom fate
does not destine to be Love's ornament,
who has to pass her days and nights alone,
her ardour cooled, her youth faded away ?

His genius is vain whom fate enthrals ;
could Kalidas avert disgrace and shame ?

Now I am old, I know love's wine lights up
a flame of all consuming fire. Fain would
I give up wine but I can't craving still.

No longer can my metal counterfeil deceive
the touchstone ; for the crucible of love
melted its dross and I am now exposed.
To Love I would present my heart but it
is neither pure nor whole. Made foul and rent
by stains of shame, what use is it to him ?

O Heedless One, stay and do not embark
on journey arduous and long. Thy heart
afire could not be quenched by winter winds.
How can you bear mid-summer heat ?

—Zinda Kaul

sho'hra chu aam sarhadan sholi bahaar kaa'liye

The frontiers of our land resound with the cry:
the spring is coming soon.
Cherish thy hopes, Love, and bestir thyself,
for spring will soon be here.
To meet the morn of the day that is dawning
see how the tulips have filled their cups
with the warm red blood of their own heart.
If we keep to the course of the timely wind,
we shall steer right our boat across the sea ;
Should we not learn this secret of life,
surely we must flounder on the way.
Take heart, my dear,
see how the drop seeks out the flood,
see how the tiny spark's eye is aflame,
and see the proud mien of the new-born crescent.
as proud as that of the full-grown moon.
If love lights its torch in the heart of man,
the dark night flies, the morning comes apace.
Who knows what the poet means to say ?
What secret he wants us to know and keep ?
But never sell the secret thou hast known,
never bend thy head, never supplicate.

Rahman Rahi— (b. 1926)

e. (Sufi Songs)

Love shall lead the way.
I will surrender myself to God. How else
shall I be shown the way that leads to Him ?
I'll seek and see the inner Moon ; the moon
without can't tell the time of 'Id for me.
I will observe the 'Id when I have seen
the mystic Moon and met my God within.

I will nor pipe the strains the tempter breathes.
My flute was cut from far-off woods,
and pierced through here on earth. It plaintive notes
tell of the land from where it came.
I will not pipe the tune the tempter calls,
but be a flute in my God's hands,
and breathe the strains of boundless love.

Anon.

I wonder, I wonder :
Wonder that God is One,
there is no god but God.
Wonder that God is all
and that there is nought but God.
Wonder that manifest is not
not I, the witness, am ;
the Lover and Love are one
there's but the Unity of Love,
Wonder where man was born.
God hid himself away,
man has to seek and strive.
Wonder we come and go
and life goes on for ever,
and nothing here is real
but ceaseless change for ever.

N'ama Saheb (d. 1880)

voa'ry do'p maashokh paa'daa karantay

Love said, "My beloved I will create ;"
and there was the tablet and the pen.
The pen wrote words of God's command.
Sing hey and ho for joy

Sheikh San'an on his rosary

recited the name of Rama ;
an Indian girl he loved
and idols worshipped he.
and followed not the prescribed path ;
yet he his love did find.
Sing hey and ho for joy ;

"I am the truth", did Mansur say,
and found his Love in his own heart.
That secret is difficult to tell
Sing hey and ho for joy :

Since I have tried to know
the truth of man's being,
the angels have begun to dance.
Sing hey and ho for joy :

وہاب کھار *Wahab Khaar* (d. 1912)

diginibalas vigini vanavaano

At the village fount the fairies sing,
hear, O hear, that song of songs.

The sea is deep, the shore far-off,
the maimed and blind sit on this side
wringing, in despair, their hands.
How can the blind take any aim ?
their bows and arrows are in vain.

Oh this storm-swept sea, countless boats
are set adrift. Some sink, some float,
and I tossed on the mid-most deeps,
see not the shore nor way across.
Show me the way, a stranger I,
Thou lead me on.
I found the way that leads across ;

and made of mine ownself a bridge
and spanned the ocean wide.
There, on the other shore, I found
"annihilation in Divine ;"
but found not I, on the shore beyond,
the Hindu or the Musalman.

The mad Aziz proclaims the truth,
to saints and sages known,
the secret truth that all are one
and love is all.

Aziz Dervesh (d. 1890)

hataa paana ba' kus gos

Who am I and what am I ?
He is all and I am not.

I was born of mother's womb,
but went away as soon as came.
I had hardly time to stay
and stare at the stars and moon.

I spun a gossamar thread,
with every breath *zikir* I said.
This truth I made my own :
that there is God and naught beside.

Nothing ? But there the Something was
and nothing something does suppose.
Who can say what nothing means ?

At the mint my skin was burnt,
and *Ilallah* was stamped on me ;
and metal tested, doubt removed.

I did not know that God is all,
The King Himself was in my home.
Now who my friend and who my foe ?

O Swach Kraal ! I scanned all round
but there was nothing, only God.
I would cry out but I could not.

سچہ کرال *—Swach Kraal*

[Lil Lyrics]

Nandalaal aav gindane raas
aara kar'y-ve aaray
Nandalal is come to dance,
make a ring, make a ring.

The wild white rose aflame with love
has taken to the woods ;

it veers and crawls beside the brooks.
Make a ring, make a ring.

Inside the mansion of the body,
See, a dance is going on,
its windows open, all the nine.
Make a ring, make a ring.

What of this world will go with us ?
Then let us lose ourselves and all
for Him who surely leads across.
Make a ring, make a ring.

O thou, maidens beautiful,
on with the dance.
Let us draw out our Lord, our Love.
Make a ring, make a ring.

O Poet, even from a child,
dance thou with Krishna, hand in hand.
Our youth will last but three short days,
make a ring, make a ring.

samiv karav athu'vaas, pa'kiv raas gindane

O come and let us hand in hand,
enter the ring and join the dance.

When Lord of Gopis gan to dance,
six months passed as a single night,
a year a day, a month an hour.

Let's make the most of life when young,
(blessed indeed the days of youth)
and thousand eras dance away.

With sisters, mothers and our aunts,
our children weaned and lulled to sleep,
shall we not go and join the dance ?

We know our way to Him, let's leave
the doors and windows open and,
like mad, go forth to meet our Lord.
Without Him what will wealth avail ?

Who yearns for Him, the Lord of Lords ?
He steals the hearts and rupture gives.
Who love Him as the Life of life.

Who suffered for the Lord as we,
and who can, like us, know Nandalal ?
Shall we not go bedecked to Him ?

But why should we renounce the world ?
What need we is the love of God.
That is our telling of the beads,
and our devout austerity.

Our casual words are mighty spells,
our random glances highest *dhyana*
our banqueting a holy fast.

We are astounded and amazed
and cannot hear and see but Him,
our vain imaginings at end.

Such bliss as this all sorrow kills,
and is not found in all the worlds,
and they in Heaven envy us.

Seeing our ecstatic dance,
the heavenly danseuse, Urvasi,
surprised and sad, dumbfounded feels.

Beyond *maya* he yet wears form,
Lord of *yoga*, enjoying all,
and yet untouched and actionless.

A call from here, a shout from there,
Radhakrishana is everywhere,
hand in hand with everyone.

Night followed the day and day the night,
and evening with the morning danced,
thus devoured devouring time.

—*Krishna Razdan* (d. 1925).

Kashmiri Lullabies

I.

The earliest reference to any collection of tales in Kashmir is to the *Brihatkathaa* (The Big Collection) of Gunadhya written in the Paishaci language. It is made by Khemendra (10th—11th century) and later by Somadeva (11th century). Kshemendra compiled an abridged version of it in his *Brihatkathaamanjari*, and Somadeva retold it in his *Kathaasaritsaagara*, both in Sanskrit. Gunadhya's *Brihatkathaa* is extinct now, and this has been an irreparable loss to Kashmiri and perhaps to the world folk literature, firstly, because, even in Europe, no systematic attempt was made to collect folktales before the work of the Brothers Grimm in the beginning of the nineteenth century ; and, secondly because scholars, like T. Benfey in 1859 have postulated an Indian origin for fairy tales and their subsequent migration to Europe. Folk literature is essentially an oral literature but it does not take long to attain the fixity of the written form though it is only at a much later period that it attracts scholars' notice. We have reason to be grateful to Sir Aurel Stein who collected *Hatim's Tales* in original with translation into English and to Rev. J. Hinton Knowles for colleting the proverbs of Kashmir embodying their wit and wisdom, and also for his *Folktales of Kashmir*, published in English translation. In 1962 a small collection of folktales, edited by Akhtar Mohi-ud-din and Pushkar Bhan, was published. entitled *Daleela*, by Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Language while another collection, in three parts han been brought out by Lalla Rookh Publications in 1955-56. Though much has undoubtedly been lost of our folklore so far as the folktale goes, it is a

matter of satisfaction that something of value has nevertheless been preserved though, I suspect, except *Hatim's Tales*, not in the original forms.

We cannot, however, say even this of the other part, viz., of the folksong, of which folklore is made. It did not seem to have betimes attracted the attention of a scholar with the result that little of the large body of our folksongs, particularly of our folk ballads, has come down to us, and that too mostly only in snatches of songs and a few stanzas, here and there, except some of them which are preserved in *Hatim's Tales*. These folkballads were, till even the second decade of the present century, sung by street singers and, what are known here as, "ladishah", by Gafaar Kawadaa'ry of Srinagar, for instance, and certainly by the itinerant ministrels of our countryside. Nevertheless, some of our folksongs still remain; and attempts have recently been made by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy* to collect them and publish them in a book form. Two such collections entitled *Kaa'shiry Luka Baa'th* were published in 1965 and 1957, one edited by Motilal Saqi and Naji Munawar and the other by Motilal Saqi They present a varied fare. "La'd'ishah" comprising satiric comic poems on such themes as floods, fires and famines; scarcity of cotton cloth and salt, both imported from artside the State; and such themes of common concern as machinations of women (*makr-i-zan*), the disobedient son (rogardaan go'bur), the harsh winter (*vandu'*) and the ridiculous situations of marriage processions (*ye'nivol*), besides nursery rhymes, cradle songs and riddles, plough songs and harvest songs and songs sung at the time of seed-sowing or weeding (*nyandu'baa'th*), dance songs (*ro'v*) and songs sung on ritual occasions such as weddings. The folksong as such is usually intensely subjective, often highly emotional; its form

* I am happy to say that the initiative for collecting folksongs was taken during my secretaryship of the Academy (1963-66), and that the work still continues with vigour, particularly in Jammu which is remarkably rich in folk ballads and songs.

is usually very simple, the 4-line stanza with a refrain at the end of each stanza. One of the oldest types is undoubtedly the love song. Though I believe that a poem presupposes a poet, the poet of the folksong is anonymous and, what is equally certain, the folksong undergoes variation, if not a complete change, with time and transmission from place to place. We do also notice that a later-day poet sometimes gives the genuine folksong a more artistic and polished form, as, in Kashmiri, Haba Khatoon seems to have done. We can discern the influence of our folksongs on the songs of our nineteenth poets, notably in the songs written in, what we distinguish as, *vatsan* songs. Even Mahjoor's refrain, *Poshemati jaanaano*, is an echo from a folksong. A notable characteristic of our folksongs, and indeed of all folksongs, is its simple melody and unmistakable rhythm, particularly of the working songs, plough songs and cradle songs, in which the folksong accompanies an activity, and indeed is intended to lighten the tedium or monotony of physical toil. It is difficult to retain the rhythm in translation and even the effect of the rhyme which is often the only cohering element among the several parts of such a song. Kashmiri still has a respectable number of lullabies, cradle songs and nursery rhymes though it has lost a considerable portion, if not almost all, of the other kinds of the folksong.

2

Like the new born baby everywhere, the new-born Kashmiri baby gets born into a world to which he is not accustomed; and the only language given him to express his protest against this unhappy unfamiliarity is to cry like

> "An infant crying in the night;
> An infant crying for the light;
> And with no language but a cry,"

The baby is newly born and the relatives or the neighbours, ladies particularly, come to see the light of their

parent's eyes and, taking the newborn baby in their arms, toss him rhythmically up and down, humming the tune

tshih tsih baali go'bur zaav
    tavay aav obrway
To lovely lady a son is born,
Honour has he brought to all.

or

tsih ta tsihas maani kyaah
bab ho yiyi mo'hraah diyi
pho'phuv yiyi budykyaah diyi
What means this tossing up and down ?
Daddy soon will offer you
    a mohur of gold ;
Uncle soon will follow him
and offer you a sovereign.

and so on, adding other, even extempore, rhyming snatches.

The newborn baby is uncomfortable and needs much soothing ; but fortunately for the Kashmiri mother, as for all mothers everywhere, he shows an early instinctive appreciation of rhythm ; and is easily comforted and calmed by the rhythmic sound of a rhyme or the measured jingle of a jingling toy. That is why folk-lullabies are common ; and so long as it has rhythm, even the rhythm of sing-song, a lullaby is sure to soothe the baby and "to bring sweet sleep down from the blissful skies". The lullaby may be as simple as this :

gura goor. gura goor
tse'h baa aasi vumbu'r poor
tse'h baa aasi balaay door
gura goor. gura goor !
May you have a long life !
May no harm come to you !

with which a Kashmiri mother sends a crying baby to sleep in

her lap but not till she reinforces the rhythmic jingle of words with the rhythmic swing of her body while the baby feels cuddled in her soft warm lap.

Sometimes the mother, for joy, addresses her baby and questions him in these affectionate words and, at the same time, interrogates the very mystery of life or gives an indirect expression to her own wishes and desires.

kati pho'lham lo gulaabo lo
kitha pho'lham lo gulaabo lo
sheri laagath bo gulaabo lo

Parenthetically, it may be said that this song is an instance of a popular song of literary origin, "kar tsu' pho'lham ta lo gulaabo lo" by Asadullah Mir, which has gained currency among the folk, undergone some variations, and become as good as accepted as a folksong. Translated it reads

Where did you bloom so long,
My Rose, my lovely Rose ?
How did you come to bloom,
My Rose, my lovely Rose ?
I will adorn my crown with you,
My Rose, my lovely Rose.

or,

nikee nikee daan'posh
kaakaylaalo tsu' roz khosh
pagaah anay lwaku't' nosh
gindu'ny dimas zu' pamposh
tapun dimas naru'josh
thaalas sheras roganjosh

Tiny, tiny flowers red
Of pomegranate tree.
Laugh and all your anger shed,
My sweet, little dearie.

Tomorrow I will get for you
A wee lovely bride.
Her play things will be, pink and blue
And lotuses bright-eyed.
She will be served dishes of meat,
Peppery, tasty, fried
And I will let her cosy be
With a warm Kaangree.

The newborn baby is easily soothed and asks for no meaning of words ; but not so the mother who bullabies the baby. She weaves her dreams and aspirations for the new-born baby in her cradle songs and, what may be called, her lap lullabies ; and loves to remember the days when she was an expectant mother.

The baby is a few weeks old and, for some reason, is crying, vexing not only his own heart but also that of his mother ; and he does not seem disposed to be soothed. Then she presses him lovingly to her bosom, offers him her rich breasts, and pats him gently, humming the rhythmic

ho ho karaayo ad'u'kale
dwad cato daama daama gali gale
t'aa't'his babasu'ndi dooru'phale
t'aat'hi maaji dwad dituy gali gale
ro'chnakho khwani kina manzale
ho ho karayo ad'u'kale
I'll pat thee gently, my darling lisping baby ;
Gently, O gently, draw milk from my breasts.
Thou diamond of thy father's dreams,
Thy mother suckles thee gently, O gently.
he nurses thee in her warm bosom,
And rocks thee in a swinging cradle.
My darling baby, my little lisping baby !

or,

laalo la'lee karaa'yo

Anantnaagu' vaalay manzul ma'lee
sol vathrun karaa'yo
su kar phali me' shar tsalee
laalo la'lee karaa'yo

In my warm lap I will rock thee
I will rock thee, my dearie.
At Anantnag
I will a cradle buy for thee,
And furnish it with bright
Red drapery.
When wilt thou wear it out ?
And wear it out quickly,
Then I would really happy be,
My sweet little dearie.

Or, the baby, is placed in the cradle and rocked to sleep:
tshu'ntho rwani manzu'lis

karay *goor goor*
thanu'ye'li pyoham ad'raatan
Zaatukh con haa lyukh Bhagvaanan
Zaatukh hyath haa aay Satare'shy yocry
vuchmayo Zaatu'kas chay vumbu'r poor
tshu'ntho rwani manzu'lis
karay *goor goor*
mwakhtu'ph'ol dakhu'chuy zapu`maale
maajan santaan zebaaye
po'tran myaanyan aapadaa door
tshu'nthoo rwani manzu'lis
karay *goor goor*
I'll rock thee, my baby, I'll rock thee.
In a cradle fringed with jingling bells,
I'll rock thee, my baby, I'll rock thee.

At the hour of midnight when thou wast born
God Himself thy horoscope cast,
And the Seven Rishis thy horoscope brought.
Thy horoscope predicts long life for thee.
I'll rock thee, my baby, I'll rock thee.
The ruby adorns and binds the rosary,
And sons to their mothers honour bring.
May my children be out of all harms' way !
I'll rock thee, my baby, I'll rock thee.

These lullabies are full of flattering compliments and protestations of affection The baby is a ruby and a diamond, a *kukil*-dove or a golden oriole, a garland of jasmine, a bouquet of roses, a posy of lilies, their parents' sweetest dream come true ; he is the splendour of the morning sun and of the morning of his parents' life ; he is the glory ofthe evening and, yea, the glory of the evening of their life ; and so on.

goora goora karayo kanu'ke dooro, kanu'ke dooro
dilihindi shaahzaada aakhaa lohooro, aakhaa lohooro
naa'ly chayaa khaa'ly maala, hat'i ho'nzooro, hat'i
honzooroo
subu'hu'ki siriyi ta shaamu'ki nooro

Thou diamond pendent of my ear-rings !
Thou Prince of Delhi on a visit to Lahore !
In thy cradle I'll rock thee gently.
A ruby necklace and a gold throat-clasp
adorn thy stately neck.
Thou splendour of the morning sun !
Thou glory of the evening tide !

Soon the baby grows and is lisping and half-articulating words and terms of endearment. He must be helped to mouth the words and, to attract him, the lullabies must now have a story element. Then in the rocking rhymes are brought in the crow, the mouse, the cat and the like. Here, for instance, is a rhyming dialogue with the Cat.

bishta bishta braaryo, kho'tkho van,
toru'kiho voluth, babu're pan,
su ka'myoo nyoonay, shaahzaadan
toru'kyaah dyutnay, mohru lachaah
su ka'mis dyut-tho, babalaalas
su ka'mis dyut-tho, baa'yt'aa't'his

and so on, till he enumerates all the endearing terms of address of all brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, and even cousins.

Hello, hello, Pussy dear,
you have been to the far-off woods,
What have you brought ? *The basil leaves.*
who bought the leaves ? *The Prince himself.*
what price he paid ? *Gold mohurs—a lakh.*
whom did you give it ? *To father dear.*
whom did you give it ? *To brother dear.*

or

kaavo gatshto da'chinpor
tati anto dache bor
tse' khyau me' khyau
ye'd'aa ba'rith
anto kunzaah mutsar tor
bache pyat'h kyaah
swada bwada bror
tas kyaah paze
poozaah paze
Dear Crow, to the vineyards go
and fetch a load of grapes.
you will eat, and I will eat,
and eat our stomaches full.
Then bring the key,
and open the door.
who is there on the tree ?
It is the wise, old cat.

What shall we do with the wise old cat ?
Treat the cat kindly.

Or, is it a girl, now somewhat grown up ? Then it is a singing game which takes the form of a rhyme somewhat like the nursery rhyme of "Ring a ring a roses".

aa'rim hikat' paa'rim hikat'
de'dy be'ny hikat' gindav naa
kaako lagay dastaars
kaakni hu'ndis singaaras
dushman vanday paa'zaaras
haka cheen cheen, haka cheen cheen

where it is the turn of the girl to pray for her parents' honour and prosperity.

Round and round and round and round,
Let us dance, O sister dear,
With interlocked hands and arms.
We dote upon our father dear ;
And how we love our mother dear !
His turban stately is and tall ;
Her headgear crowned with ornaments.
May their enemies grovel in the dust
Under their very shoes !

haka cheen cheen, haka cheen cheen

or

hatabee be'nee, kyaahbee be'nee
hu maa vuchthan, kus bee con
boy myon, hali kyaah
shimla myon, vwad'i kyaah
taa'c myaa'ny, khoran kyaah
lacidaar paa'zaar, baa'y madanas
das baa das, zaa'na kadal vas

tati myaa'ny vyas

O sister dear, O sister dear.
What is the matter, sister dear ?
Did you see him ?
Who is he ?
Brother mine
How is he dressed
round the waist ?
He has tied a scarf of mine.
What does he wear on the head ?
He has worn a cap of mine.
What has he put on his feet ?
My brother wears a fancy shoe.
Then let us go,
Then let us go.
To Zaina Kadal let us go.
Who is there ?
A friend of mine.
Let us go, let us go.

or again

hiku't'aa, miku't'aa
baa'y a'nim doony kaah
khyamu' kyaah, dimu' kyaah
baanu'kut'hi thavu' kyaah
hashi zaa'm dimu' kyaah
Round and round, make a ring.
Brother got me walnuts,
but only one and ten.
What shall I eat, what shall I give ?
And what in store shall I lay by ?
What shall I offer
my mother-in-law ?
What shall I give
to sister-in-law ?

The girl is grown up. She is being introduced to words like "mother-in-law" and "sister-in-law"; and it is time she stopped these jingling rhymes. But she can now sing them with little girls of her age and no longer needs her mother to sing them for her.

hikat' karav' *Raam Raam,*
thakh dimav, Pahalgaam,
tora vaalav, babri byol,
shuryan la'sin, panu'ny maa'ly
harda karav, ye'ni vaa'ly
hikat' karav, *Raam Raam*

Let us dance—let us dance ;
to the tune of—*Raam, Raam.*
We shall stop at—Pahalgaam,
and shall bring—the basil seed.
Our children's—fathers all—
May they have—a long life !
At harvest time—we celebrate
weddings and—festivities.
Let us dance—let us dance.

Masnavi Tradition And "Saamnaama"

What are the literary traditions of *Saamnaama* in Kashmiri, particularly as rendered by Lakshman Raina "Bulbul" of Naagom? The question has two aspects. One, what are the literary traditions in the source language, that is, Persian from which the theme has been taken? Second, what are the traditions in this genre in the language into which the theme has been rendered, that is, Kashmiri?

First, about the literary traditions in the original Persian. The story of Saam Pahalwaan, son of Naremaan, has, first of, all, been rendered into verse by the great Persian poet Firdausi in his classic *Shahnama* In this epic of the kings of Iran. Firdausi narrates the war exploits of Rustum and Sohrab and Rustum's ancestors, his father Zaal of the white hair and his grandfather Saam, the son of Naremaan. He tells us that Saam, believing that the birth of this son Zaal, born with silvery hair, was an event of ill omen, left him unprotected at Mount Elbruz in the Caucasus, where he was, however, brought up by a Simurgh. The father and the son meet some years later and they are both received by king Manoch-har. Firdausi tells us of Zaal's falling in love with the daughter of the King of Kabul, Roodaba, and of Saam's being sent by the King to make war on Kabul. This creates an embarrassing complication; but after many turns of events, all ends happily in the marriage of Zaal with Roodaba.

Another Persian source is Khwajoo Kirmani's *Saamnaama*, also called *Humaayee wa Humaayoon*. Khwajoo has built the poem on the exploits of Saam who, unlike as in *Shahnama*, is

the chief hero of his masnavi. This poem begins w Manochahar's court, when Saam is introduced. The story begins to move on with Saam's going on a hunting expedition ; then it revolves round Saam's hearing of Pareedakht, his falling in love, and his consequent numerous exploits like his war on, and the defeat of, the King of China, the enthroning of the King's son Qamartaash ; and it ends with the reutrn of Saam and his newly-won wife Pareedakht back to the court of King Manochahar.

These were the two Persian sources of the Kashmiri *Saamnaama*. Evidently, these sources were foreign and therefore limited, in their usefulness, mainly to the theme, the story, the incidents of the story and the characters involved in the story There were, however, other literary traditions available in Kashmiri, though not pertaining to the exploits of Saam. What were they ? For, they might naturally be a less effective influence and less obtrusive but perhaps, more comprehensive and certainly more intimate. What, then, do we find in this Kashmiri tradition not directly pertaining to the theme of the mansnavi ?

Firstly, by about the end of the eighteenth century, we descern beginnings of a new literary age of Kashmiri which, in its dominant urge and characteristics, may be said to have survived till the first quarter of the present century. In this age we find the Kashmiri poets modelling their compositions closely on Persian, not only in theme but also in diction and metre and not always fully assimilated to the genius of Kashmiri. With rare exceptions, the poets borrow wholesale the theme and the story and the epithets and phrases, conceit and hyperbole of Persian masnavis. They increasingly turn to the old Persian themes of legend and history, to Shirin and Farhaad, Laila and Majnoon, Wamiq and Uzra, Sohrab and Rustum, and Saam and Naremaan, not to mention themes drawn from

religious and other wars. Indeed, the Kashmiri poet does not merely borrow the story, he goes further and merely translates.

Secondly, this is the age of the masnavi in Kashmiri, of the metrical romance, of love, adventure and war, of tales which do not lend themselves to verisimilitude or reality, partaking as they do of impossible exploits and astonishing deeds and adventures. Apart from versifying the local legends of Heemaal and Naa'gyraay and Akanandun, a few stories from *the Mahabharata* and *the Puranas*, the translation of *the Ramayana*, and of the Punjab romances of *Heer Raanjha* and *Sohni Maahiwaal*, all the rest of the numerous Kashmiri masnavis are translations of the Persian epics or masnavis, most of them written in the Persian metre of *bahar-i-hazaj*.

Thirdly, by far the largest number of Kashmiri masnavis are Bazmiya (love) romances as against Razmiya (war) masnavis. There are, besides, Hazliya (comic-satiric) masnavis but their number is comparatively small. Mahmud Gami (d. 1855) started the vogue and wrote eight masnavis, chief of which are *Yusuf Zulaikha*, *Shirin Khusro*. *Sheikh San'an* and *Harun-ur-Rashid*. He was followed by his contemporary, Valliullah Motoo, who wrote *Heemaal*; and, soon after, by Maqbul Shah, the author of the famous love romance, *Gulrez*, and of the comic-satiric masnavi on the Kasmiri farmer entitled *Greestnaama*; and also by Prakash Ram, the author of the Kashmiri *Ramayana* and *Lava Kusha Carit*. It is Mahmud Gami who brought into vogue the *rekhta* style in Kashmiri, characterised by ornateness and a surfeit of Perso-Arabic diction. All other masnavi writers, including Wahab Pare of Hajin (1846—1914), noted as the most voluminous masnavi writer, came later and need not be considered here. It may not be denied that though Mahmud Gami's masnavis are all love romances yet they did set a pattern, in the matter of diction, metre and style, even for those of his successors who

tried their hand at writing razmiya (war) masnavis In them the main theme is war and war-like adventure in which love may come in but only as a subsidiary theme or, may be, as the motive power for the war or for its subsidiary battles and adventures. Chief among the earlier poets who attempted razmiya masnavis were Lakshman Raina "Bulbul" of Naagom and Amir Shah of Kreer. Wahab Pare of Hajin wrote *Akbarnaama* and *Bahraam Gor* before he embarked in 1870 on his tour de force, his 23,491—verse translation of Firdausi's *Shahnama*, which he finished twenty years later in 1890. This cannot be said to have been a model for the writers, Lakshman Raina and Amir Shah. The masnavi tradition available to them may, therefore be illustrated, though in translation, only from Mahmud Gami, Valiullah Motoo, and Maqbul Shah. From them I select such passages as could illustrate situations which may arise even in razmiya masnavis like the death of a hero or an important character (from Mahmud Gami's *Shirin Farhad*) a didactic passage from Valiullah's *He maal*, for a razmiya masnavi writer often stops to make moralising observations ; and a passage depicting separation of lovers which is necessitated by war (from Maqbul Shah's *Gulrez*) are given in this very order.

1. The Death of Farhad

Tis said when Khusro was convinced that he
could not make Shirin disavow Farhad,
and that Farhad had dug hillside canal,
he said to his viziers, "what may I do ?
To Shirin I must make my promise good :
You know she has been pining for Farhad
if I abide not by my word, Shirin will pine
and die and I, without her, cannot live.
And if she leaves me for Farhad, it will
no better be for me." The wise viziers
counselled and said, We shall announce Shirin

is dead. They found a woman clever, old,
with age bent double, whom they sent to meet
Farhad and break the news to him so that
he should not doubt but that Shirin was dead.
When she approached Farhad, at once she cried,
"O hapless lover, they love, Shirin, is dead.
Make haste to go and have a last look at
her face". "Alas !" he cries, "no more shall I
behold that angel face. No more, no more !
My fate has turned against me when I hoped
for better days. The water tunnelled through
the hill has leaked. So has my fate. The prey
has slipped even when within my grasp. O who
has wished me ill and seperation brought
about." So saying, he took up his adze
and broke his head in twain but dying cried :
"My God take me to where my Shirin lies".
The news soon reached her and she came as fast
as she could come to see her lover dead ;
and tears rolled down her face and would not stop.
She cried out to Farhad who prostrate lay
in dust, a graceful cypress felled to the ground,
his rosy cheeks besmeared with blood, his head
injured beyond a cure. In her soft lap
she placed his head and mourned : "Say Farhad, my
eternal Love, how has this dreadful end
upon you come ? Whom at that moment dark,
when death was near, did you for sherbet ask ?
Arise awhile and hear my doleful cry,
I cannot keep alive when you are gone.
How can I fill my days and nights when you
are not with me ? How easily you let
yourself fall in the trap, my guileless Love,
but rest assured Shirin is thine for ever,
and thine alone. Mahmud Gami (d. 1855)

2. The Good Wife and the Bad Wife

A good wife is her husband's comfort, rest
and peace. She is a garden gay for him to
feast his eyes upon and bring him joy.
She is forebearing and obedient
and ever ready to serve. Should she invite
him to her father's home, there he receives
a royal welcome like a king in his subject's
domain. His wife brings honour to his home :
steadfast in days of want or woe, she is
a shady chinar unto him, providing
shade and sheltering care.
A bad wife is a contrast to the good :
recalcitrant, ill-humoured, obstinate.
Her husband is obedient to her,
but stubborn she won't listen to his pleas.
She stains his reputation. ill fame brings
with tantrums, troubles, arguments. His home
the scene of quarrels and disputes, he is
to answer summons from the court (she claims
her marriage portion in a divorce suit)
or Kotwal's calls for allegations made
by her against her husband meek : "Come out
you wretch", "answer the Kotwal's call".
To him his wife a cruel tyrant is.
She will complain of want though there is none
and put his family to shame: always
wow, wow, she barks are if a pariah dog ;
or, like rats in a barn, she steals the grain ;
or, illness she pretends and makes him spend ;
or, like a host of wasps, she stings and smarts ;
or, when occasion so demands, she cries
and weeps or softly speaks so that she may,
in either case, her object gain.

Valiullah Motoo (d. 1858).

3. Noshlab's Lament

The day dawned and the bulbuls chirped noisily
and long, awakening me from slumber sweet
and sleep-laden eyes of one on a cool
late morning in the spring. Me thought I was
beside my love, but when I looked and looked,
I found the garden gone and gone my Love
and last night's revelry. My dawn was turned
to dusk, my joy to grief. I found no sign
of him nor flowers to sport among ; instead
all thorns to wound my heart ; no treasure to find,
instead the dragon fierce. No longer I
believed my eyes and cried : Alas it was
a dream I yerternight did dream when Love
and I in ecstasy did lie. And now
in fever of body and anguish of soul, I cried
to him : My true yet faithless Love, so sweet
and warm yet sour and cool, lull me to sleep
yet leave me thus to nurse seperation's sorrow ?
But no, you will not leave me thus to grieve,
and give up hope to see my Love, my own
true love again, save whom I cannot sleep
nor rest. My pearl, where have you stayed away,
O where ? My lamentations reach you not.
O morning breeze, waft you my plaint to him
with courtesy, and with sweet airs awaken
his love for me who am in bloom of youth,
fading as yellow rose doth fade when winter
draws nigh. How does a starling feel on a pan
of fire and *tosa-pashmina* shawl when moths
eat into it-so you can feel what hath
befallen me and that I cannot live
when Love is far away".

These illustrations leave out Prakash Ram's *Raamavtaar Carit* and *Lava Kusha Carit*, also known by the shorter name of *Ramayana*, the only razmiya masnavi available to Lakshman Raina for his *Saamnaama* and to Amir Shah for his *Saamnaama Khaavarnaama* and Jang-i Alqam. Speaking of Lakshman Raina alone, it is very likely that he must have heard of Prakash Ram's *Ramayana* and, perhaps, even read it in a manuscript copy. According to the latest research on the subject by Dr Baljinath Pandit in his introduction to his edition of *Ramayana* Prakash Ram was an elder contemporary of his, who wrote it in 1847 (1904 Bikrami) while Lakshman Raina wrote his *Saamnaama* in 1874 (1931 Bikrami). But even Prakash Ram's *Ramayana* could not be a model for Lakshman Raina's *Saamnaama*; for, though Prakash Ram wrote the *Ramayana* in the masnavi couplet form, its tone is devotional and its purpose and object the inculcation of Sri Rama *bakhti* and piety generally. There are, no doubt, battles and combats e. g., between Jatayan and Ravana, Lakshman and Indarjeet, Sri Rama and Ravana, yet the descriptions of actual combats are meagre and they form a small part of the epic as a whole. Moreover, the many *lila* or devotional songs, however pertinent they might be from the devotional point of view, detract from it as a purely razmiya narrative. There is quite an impressive list* of razmiya masnavis in Kashmiri though their literary merit is not high. All of them were, however, surely written after Lakshman Raina wrote his *Saamnaama*, even though we may not know the exact date of their composition. They were all much younger to him. This is so also with Amir

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*For the list, see *Indian Literature* vol. 3, no. 2, 1960 published. by Sahitya Akademi, Delhi, prepared by Professor P. N. Pushp, serial numbers 105—121 (page 134), 277, 288, 303 (page 138), and no. 322 (page 139). It is surprising that the list does not mention *Saamnaama* by Lakshman Raina nor even his love masnavi, *Nal-o-Daman Nala (Damayanti)*. Also refer to the National Bibliography of Indian Literature, 1901-1953 (Sahitya Akademi), second volume, pages 351-359.

Shah Kreeri (1846-1905), who was about twenty years younger to Lakshman Raina. Even if we may not think it impossible for Amir Shah having written his *Saamnaama* before Lakshman Raina wrote his masnavi of the same name, it is very improbable that Amir Shah's masnavi could have been available to him. Printing facilities were then unknown in Kashmir, and Amir Shah's masnavi was not printed till long after his death. Lakshman Raina lived at Naagom, nine miles south-west of Srinagar, while Kreeri lies three miles away from Taapar, twenty-one miles down Srinagar on the Baramulla Road in Kamraaz where Lakshman Raina had no contacts, his only contacts having been in the Maraaz (South and south-east) side of the Valley. It is therefore, highly improbable that Amir Shah's masnavi was available to him, even if we suppose it to have been written earlier, which is very doubtful.

A comparison of the *Saamnaamas* of Lakshman Raina and Amir Shah reveals that, in the treatment of the story, in the different metres employed by them, in the interspersing of ghazals and songs in his romantic tale by the former, and other variations between the two masnavis, Lakshman Raina's *Saamnaama* was an original attempt, independent of Amir Shah's masnavi. Even Wahab Pare does not seem to have known of Lakshman Raina's *Saamnaama*. Both Wahab Pare and Amir Shah belonged to Kamraaz (north and north-west) side of the Valley ; they lived not very far from each other and knew each other well. We have internal evidence of the fact that Wahab Pare did not include the story of Saam in his *Shahnama* because, as he] himself has said, his friend Amir Shah had already rendered into Kashmiri the "long and sweet tale, of the love of Saam for Pareedakht and his exploits, which Firdausi had touched upon but briefly and which Khwajoo had rendered more fully into his *Saamnaama*". Amir Shah's masnavi is based upon Khwajoo who, following Fridausi, writes it in *bahar-i-taqaarib*. Be that as it may, Lakshman

Raina's *Saamnaama* is much smaller in volume than Amir Shah's; he leaves out many rambling sub-plots, which gives his masnavi a much greater unity and coherence; he does not, like Amir Shah, merely translate but rather adapts the theme, giving it more of local atmosphere from the imagery native to the soil, his verse is not as overloaded with *rekhta* as Amir Shah's for, though inter-woven with Perso-Arabic diction, it is purer and very much less incongruous; and, unlike Amir Shah, he uses *bahar-i-hazaj* metre for his masnavi. It must be said here that, to my mind, *bahar-i-hazaj* is not as suitable as *bahar i-taqaa·ib* used by Amir Shah; for the latter, being a shorter metre. has a more unhindered flow for a narrative of rapid movement. Lakshman Raina's ghazals and songs and his glowing tributes to *caay* (tea) are also his own, though I would leave out most of them because they are, firstly, a few too many and secondly not of as high a merit as the narrative part of the masnavi.

I am not here dwelling on a closer examination of the masnavi and its literary merit. I am however giving below a short passage in translation to indicate, in some measure, the difference in theme, tone and temper of a bazmiya masnavi as against the illustrations given above.

Saam and Makokaal Fight

Then Makokaal rushed in the frenzied fray;
brows knitted, h uttered a hideous roar
and charged at Saam with dazzling sword and spear.
While Saam his head did shield and warded off
the blow by a hair breadth, it fell upon
his horse Guraab and killed him on the spot.
Unhorsed thus, Saam stood his ground on foot.
Enraged he was and lifted high his mace
with all his might and main and aimed it at
his enemy's elephant and smote his head,

who fell down dead and shook the ground beneath
Now on a level with Saam Makokaal,
surprised and put to shame, his deadly blows
struck on Saam The air resounded with
the clangour of their arms ; with warlike skill
they fought with battle-axes, spears and clubs.
Long they fought but equal proved in fight
till Makokaal impatient grew and raised
a battle-cry and, like a wild bull, charged !
but, springing up, Saam caught him by the horns
and wrenched and twisted them and tore them off
as he would brittle branches of a tree.
Then Makokaal his sinewy arms raised
to smite but Saam unsheathed his sword and cut
his shoulder blade. Now Makokaal raised up
his other arm to catch Saam's head but he
struck a blow and cut his arm and threw
it on the ground, disabling him as if
he were a partridge in a net. But he
now opened wide his mouth to bite but Saam
smote him with mace and felled him to the ground,
and hewed and hacked him limb from limb. His blood
flowed copious, he rolled in dust and died.

Lachman Raina. (d. 1897).

To sum up, it may be said that though he must have imbibed certain influences of the local form of the literary masnavi, its prevailing diction and style, and though he drew upon the Persian originals for his story, Lakshman Raina's *Saamnaama* is an original contribution to the razmiya masnavis of Kashmiri ; and that, from a literary point of view, it is an eminently successful contribution though he himself was not satisfied and should rather have written it in Persian. Indeed, he concludes his masnavi with a complaint :

Writing verse in Kashmiri
    is groping in the dark.
If you would shine as candle-flame,
    write in Persian verse ;
you merely waste your talent if
    you write in Kashmiri.
For you would not the jasmine hide
    in a nettle bush,
nor edible oil or spices waste
    on a dish of mallow wild.
But times have changed and Persian is
    no longer read ;
and radish and loaf-sugar is
    relished alike.

Poets are not prophets and Lakshman Raina has been proved wrong. Times have changed and Persian is not very much read. But he did not *waste* his undoubted poetic talent in writing his masnavis in Kashmiri. Far better and one-time-very famous poets who wrote in Persian are not only not read but are forgotten except in name ; but Lakshman Raina should as days pass by, become even better known than he is today.

Lal Ded*

The fourteenth century was a period of storm and stress in Kashmir which witnessed formidable new social and political challanges. It was the time during which Muslim rule was firmly established when Shah Mir deposed Kota Rani (1338-39) the widow queen of Udyanadeva (1323-1338), and ascended the throne as Shams-un-din Shah Mir in 1339 A. D. The Muslim missionaries were attracted to the Valley to propagate Islam and proselytize the people. Mir Sayyid Ali of Hamadan came with a considerable following in 1379-80 and stayed in the valley for six years. But though Islam seems to have spread fairly rapidly, it could not, in the early years of the Muslim rule, strike deep roots or transform completely the entire body of mystical tradition, religious beliefs and observances which the people had inherited from the ancient times. This had already produced some sort of synthesis or amalgam of Buddhist, Tantric and Idealist Shaiva Monism, known as the Trika which had appeared, or as some would insist reappeared, towards the beginning of the ninth century. That there came about an encounter, if not a direct collision, between the old tradition and the new challange was, however, inevitable even in these early years of the propagation of Islam. Side by side with the saints and missionaries who came from foreign lands, this period saw also the rise of Muslim saints, native to the soil and strongly influenced by the local tradition and the founding of the famous Muslim Order of Rishis or Babas by Sheikh Nur-ud-din Vali of Tsrar Sharif (1376-1838 , popularly known as Nund Rishi.

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* **Pronounciation :** लल् द्यद्

Another result of this encounter was that, though it continued to be for a considerable time the language of official communication and record even after the end of the Hindu rule, Sanskrit lost the State patronage and Persian came gradually to occupy its status. It was about this time, when Sanskrit was losing its hold on society, and the Hindu society itself was disintegrating, but while yet Persian had not completely replaced it, that poetry came to find expression in the real language of the common people.

It was in this socio-religious milieu that Lallesvari or Lalla Arifa, affectionately and popularly known as Lal Ded (Granny Lal), was born about 1335. Little is known about her life, and indeed the earliest historical reference is found in Azam Dedamari's *Waqi'at-i Kashmir* (C 1730 A. D.). We cannot even be sure about the exact dates of her birth and death ; but tradition has endured and, though much legend has grown round her name and many miracles are told of her, we can with some certainty say a few things about her life. She was born of fairly well-to-do parents at Pandrenthan, four miles to the south east of Srinagar, where she seems, even at a tender age, to have come under the religious influence of the family priest, Shri Siddha Mol (Venerable Siddha). She was married at the early age of twelve into a Pandit family of Padmapura (now Pampor), eight miles from Srinagar. Here she (now named Padmavati) was harshly treated by her mother-in-law and even accused of infidelity to her husband ; but she suffered it all uncomplainingly and, indeed, underwent a rigorous self-discipline during this time and developed the inner attitude of "holy indifference" and detachment towards all matter-born contacts. The truth was found out soon and what was supected to be a secret assignation turned out to be her daily tryst with God on whom she used to meditate at a quiet spot away from home when she went on her daily chore of fetching water from the river ghat. One morning, says the

legend, when she went with her pitcher to the ghat, her women neighbours teased her about the feast of *grahashanti* which was to be held that day her house. "What nice dishes you will have to-day" said they ; "surely you will not forget to invite us". Lalla uttered words in reply that have become a proverb : " *ho'nd maarytan ya kat'h Lalli nalavath t·ali na zanih* " (they may kill a big lamb or a small one, Lalla will have her pebble all right). Quite by accident, her father-in-law overheard the remark and, when food was served to her at home, he verified the truth of it Her husband too could not appreciate her sublime indifference and mistook it for her coolness towards himself. Time came soon when, in an irresistible mood of divine *tyaga* (renunciation), she left her home for ever and took to the life of a wandering recluse, living in jungles and mountain caves, going about in utter disregard of personal appearance, in a semi-nude state. Henceforth she became known as Lal because her abdomen (*lal* in Kashmiri) increased in size and hung loose over her pubic region.

We know from her own verse-sayings, called *Vaakh* (Sanskrt Vakya, word), that she was upbraided by some and respected by others, but neither praise nor blame affected her. It is certain that during her wanderings about the Valley she met many sanyasis and saints and fakirs, both Hindu and Muslim ; and the tradition is persistent that she met Mir Sayyid Ali of Hamadan and that she inspired Nund Rishi with her teachings, who held her in great respect. Says he :

> That Lalla of Padmanpore, she drank
> her fill of divine *amrita* and found
> her seat in the lap of Lord. O God,
> grant me the same blessed wish !

What is undeniably certain is that she has wielded a remarkable influence on the popular religious thought of both Hindus and Muslims of Kashmir ; and there is hardly any comparable

figure anywhere of a Hindu saint being held in such reverence by Muslims and Hindus alike. Muslim chroniclers have written of her as *'arifa Kamila Lalla majzooba* ('Azam Dedamari) and *'arifa Kamila sani Rabia'* (*Tarikh-i-Hassan*); and she is to this day regarded as a God-realized saint and inspired teacher, and her *vaakh* (verse-sayings) are still popular. She was indeed a precursor of that cultural and religious fusion which took place in Kashmir as well as in other parts of India between the ancient spiritual heritage of Vedanta and the new Sufi tradition of Islam.

It is important to understand why Lal Ded has had this mighty hold on people's thought and affection. There are three main reasons. First, while she continued the indigenous Shaiva tradition, she gave expression to it in a popular form and, much more significantly, in the real language of the people themselves. Perhaps for the first time in Kashmir, were mystical truths and the disciplines relevant to their realization made available to the people at large, then mostly unlettered here as elsewhere, in the language they spoke. It is however not the abstruse philosophical truths nor even the disciplines of *kundalini* and *Na la-Bindu* yoga that made her the poet-saint of the people. It is rather the sincerity of faith, the stamp of intensity of her mystic experience and the authenticity of her poetic expression revealed by an energy of idiom and homely but terse imagery, unsurpassed till the present day, that has given her verse-sayings a lasting eminence both in the people's minds and in Kashmiri literature. Her sayings have become current coin even in the speech of today and retain their freshness of appeal for all alike, whether scholar or peasent. In her verses we find a self-certifying passionate apprehension of mystical truths which is the mark of a God-realized saint.

Secondly, there is little doubt that the cult of Muslim

Rishis contained much that had come down from Buddhist and Shaiva mystical disciplines; and, indeed, similarities have been traced even between them and the tenets, particularly of *hama-ost* (all that is is He) sufi tradition, of Muslim sufi saints who came from foreign lands. That is how it came about that the Rishis (as observed in *Ain-i-Akbari*) "did not suffer themselves to be fettered by traditions and were true worshippers of God, and reviled not any other sect". Even as late as the last decade of the 19th century, Sir Walter Lawrence*, who knew the Valley intimately, observed that the rural Muslim population was very unlike other Muslims in the matter of tolerance for Hindus and reverence for the shrines of the Rishis.

Thirdly, Lal Ded had no patience with hypocrisy or mere outward observance of the ritualism of the time such as idol worship, nor with the narrow exclusiveness of society. She spoke bluntly against animal sacrifice, and always stressed the purity of mind and good conduct. She was free from all dogma, and had the Hindu's catholicity for different creeds. It does not matter by what name we call him.

> "Siva wa Keshow wa Jin wa
> Kamalazanatha nam daryan yus"

whether we call him Siva or Vishnu or Buddha or Brahma. What matters is following the path of God in the right spirit.

It is in the contexc of these circumstances that we can understand the reverence in which Lal Ded has been universally held in Kashmir. Shams Faqir (1843—1904), a revered mystic fakir poet, sang of her.

> Lalla merged her *prana* in the Transcendent Void;
> and while ostensibly she went to bathe at the shrine
> at Shurahyar ghat, with a leap and a bound

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* *The Valley of Kashmir* (O. U. P. London 1895)

she jumped across this world to where there is none
but God.

While we know little, except as oral tradition and legend. of her worldly life, we can know a good deal of her spiritual biography from her verse-sayings, expressed in the poetic form call *Vaakh* of which she was the innovator. The *Vaakh* in Kashmiri is mystical or didactic in content and a sententious 4-line stanza in its form, sometimes rhymeless but usually rhyming abab, abcb, abac. There is a flexibility in her verse and we can discern stress being substituted for quantity. Her *Vaakh* show her to have been a Shaiva Yogini as noticed by Paramananda (1791 to 1879), another famous mystic poet of the last century :

> Unique in her yoga of *dvadashants mandala*,
> realising *anahata*, *nada*, *bindu* and *Om*,
> Lalleshwari attained to the Supreme Ananda.

How did Lalla attain to the Supreme or, as she put it, "the ineffable Somewhat" ? In poignant verses she expresses her early striving, her keen longing and *vairagya*, her "night of the spirit" and "dryness of the soul".

> I weep and weep for thee, my soul,
> the illusion of the world hath befallen thee.
> Not for thee will survive even a shadow of the
> the things thou lovest,
> Alas ! why then hast thou forgot thine own true
> Self ?

> Ah me ! the five, the ten, and the eleven*
> have scraped out this pot and gone away.
> Should they all invite and pull upon the rope,
> why should the cow of the eleven go astray ?

In moving imagery and idiom, racy of the soil, Lal Ded tells

*The five *bhutas* and the ten vital airs ; the eleven are the ten *indriyas* and manas the pot and the *cow* refer to the Jiva.

us that in this world she feels like one towing a boat with an unspun thread ; she is here wasting like water in unbaked clay ; the burden of this unintelligible world with its sensual pleasures is like a sugar candy load that has bent her body, and it galls her back ; the truth she has heard from her *Guru*, that she must lose the world to find the Self, has been a blister of loss to her ; the flock of her senses has lost their shepherd ; and almost in helpless despair, she cries to God :

> *dyava bozi day myon me' ti divi taar*
>
> Would that God heard my prayer and brought me safe across :

In a picturesque succession of metaphors like the ones above, she tells us how on her spiritual path she has had to undergo all the painful processes that a newlypicked cotton flower undergoes from the moment when the cleaner and the carder kick it to the time when spun into "gossammar yarn" and woven into cloth and then dashed on the washing-stone, the tailor eventually works his scissors on it. There are continuous references in her verses to the hard disciplines she practised, mainly the awakening of the *kundalini* by means of mastering her vital airs, *prana* and *apana*. These for instance :

1. I worked and worked at the bellows-pipe
   till the light flared forth and I saw the true Self,
   till the light shone within and spread without.

2. The steed of mind speedeth over the sky
   and a lakh leagues traverseth he in the twinkling of the eye ,
   Yet a man of true intelligence can rein in the curvetting steed,
   and on the wheels of *prana* and *apana* guide his chariot aright.

3. I closed the doors and windows of my body's mansion,
   and caught my life-breath as a thief within ;

I bound him fast in the cell of my heart, and with
the stinging whip of OM I flayed him there.

4. Searching and seeking Him, I, Lalla, wearied myself,
and even beyond my strength I strove,
Looking for Him, I found his doors bolted and barred ;
this deepened my longing and stiffened my resolve ;
and I would not move but stood where I was,
full of longing and love, to gaze on Him.

5 Mastering my vital airs, I cut my way
through Forests Six*, when the mystic Moon awoke
for me, and the world of Prakriti dried up and vanished,
Thus came I to where I Shankar found.

Lalla impresses upon us the truth that mere ritual, pilgrimage or formal worship will not do. "An idol is but stone and a temple is but stone", she declaims, and it is the height of folly to "offer a living sheep to a lifeless stone". She thinks little of miracles :

> To stop the flowing water, to cool a raging fire,
> to roam the skies on sandalled feet,
> to get milk from a wooden cow
> all this is base jugglery and nothing more.

He alone is worthy to seek the Lord who has slain the three highway robbers-Lust, Pride and Greed. A true seeker, in his humility and loving kindness, learns to be the servant of all (*logun daas*) ; and, he has to empty his mind of all vain imaginings, and rivet it continuously upon his true Self. This is hard to do and rarely done. *Shiva Chuy kroot'h* : Shiva is hard to find ; and mere quietism or self-suppression or mere wishing is of little avail. As for herself (says she) the

* the six *cakras* or the six sheaths of Sakti which must be pierced before the Moon of the *Sahasrara* is reached wherefrom nector flows downwards to the *nadis*.

impurities within her all burnt away and desire slain, she knelt, just there, on bended kness and would not stir. She would not give in and, indeed, longed the more to behold Him who was beyond her sight, and as she stood gazing at the door, Lo! He opened it and

"There, within herself, I saw Him whole".

and "He was all and everywhere and I was not".

Says she :

1. When by oft-repeated discipline, the wide expanse of the manifested universe is lifted to the Void ;
When the *saguna* becomes merged in the *akasha* with a splash, like water falling into water ;
When even the ethereal Void is dissolved
and nothing remains but the Weal—
then, O Bhatta, learn that this is the true
doctrine for you.

2. Here, there is no word, nor thought,
no transcendent nor non-transcendent ;
nor is there entry here by vows of silence,
or *mudras* betokening mystic postures ;
here not even does Shiva-Shakti (Tattva) remain ;
That Somewhat which remains is the truth for you.

3. The soul is ever new, the moon is ever new ;
so do I see this world for ever new and new.
Since I, Lalla, scoured my body and mind
(all yesterdays and tomorrows faded away),
I live in the ever present, the Now,
for ever new and new.

Now there was nought for her to do or to abstain from doing ; there was nothing anywhere but He ; and. indeed, even in this world of name and form, it is He,

"the Narayana sporting Himself in wonderful forms"
And, now says she,

> Whatever work I did, what was worship ;
> Whatever I uttered, that became a *mantra* :
> This recognition entered every fibre of my being
> as the essence of the knowledge of Parama Shiva

Ice and snow and water, says she, seem separate entities ; but when the sun shines, they become one ; likewise the Supreme is the Reality behind

"the one Shiva and Universe and soul".

Thus did Lal Ded enrich the thought and literature of Kashmir and, what is significant, leave behind a forceful message for tolerance and understanding and, indeed, a possible synthesis of cultures for the land of her birth. She has been not only the most famous poet-saint of Kashmir but the maker of Kashmiri poetry. endowing it with the qualities of effective metaphor and imagery drawn from the familiar surroundings, with memorable sayings that have become current coin ; and, what is more,

"with vision which increases the power of speech ;
with inspired speech which makes vision more penetrating".

Haba Khatoon and A'rnimaal

Lal Ded is a class apart, not because she is a God-realised saint or even a maker of Kashmiri literature but because her *vaakh*, at their best, have a rare freshness that will not let them grow stale; and they still transport us with rapture or "stab the heart and shake the soul". There is poetry that age cannot wither nor custom stale. There are, however, other "stairs of poetry" (in A. E. Housman's phrase), other than the loftier ones of rapture, awe and vision, yet stairs of poetry nonetheless. It is on these other stairs of Kashmiri poetry that we can recognise Haba Khatoon and A'rnimaal.

Kashmir had to wait nearly two hundred years after Lal Ded before she found another significant woman poet in Haba Khatoon, who lived in the sixteenth century. The story of her life has come down to us in oral tradition and legend; and even the legends differ in essential particulars. Some still persist in believing that she came of a Dard stock and will point to a spot beyond Gurais where the Kashpat stream from Tilel Valley meets the Kishenganga near Tsoorwan which is associated with her name. But the other legend is more persistent and popularly accepted which makes her out as a true Kashmiri, born and bred up in the Valley itself.

Be that as it may, her life-story is a romantic story. From a country girl and a farmer's daughter she rose to be a famous queen of Kashmir. She is said to have been born in the picturesque little village of Tsandahor, two miles south-east of Pampore, a much larger village on the Srinagar-Jammu road, eight miles from Srinagar and famous for its saffron fields. Tsandahor is situated at the foot of the wide saffron

plateau which has deep and broad fissures, forming glens and small valleys and dividing the plateau into picturesque ups and downs, ideal spots for lovers' tryst. Here Haba Khatoon was born and at an infant age was sent by her father Abdulla Raathar to a Mulla's private school to learn to read the Holy Koran. She showed promise and soon won village recognition for her sweet impressive recitation of the Holy Koran and her quick intelligence. It did not take her long to be known for her learning among a people, both men and women of whom were almost wholly illiterate, since she had not only learnt to recite the Holy Koran but also completed the basic education of those days comprising Sheikh Saadi's *Karimaa*, *Gulistan* and *Bostan*.

Precocious fame in a small village is not without its disadvantages; it made Haba Khatoon a marked girl who was pointed out and talked about by everybody. Her father, surprised and not a little affrighted at the precocious intelligence and forwardness of his daughter, hurried her into marriage with (what seems to us) a very unlikely lad, a typical peasant boy of those days, illiterate and without imagination. At her husband Aziz Raathar's peasant home she, an unusually gifted girl, could not be happy; her husband and her mother-in-law simply could not understand her nor appreciate the unwanted and useless gifts (as they thought) of music and song in a girl whose chief occupation in life was to be a farmer's helpmate in the fields, to tend the corn, and water and weed out the kail-yard. Out of this conflict and tension of her everyday life was born that nostalgic strain which is characteristic of her song and, indeed, of all the songs that came to be written and sung at this period of the Kashmiri lyric, a new kind of poem, which talks of human love in contrast with the mystical *Vaakh** of Lal Ded which had been in vogue for two hundred years before her time.

1. See the chapter, *Kashmiri Lyrics*.

This is the *lol*-lyric. The *lol*-lyric of Kashmir is a short poem, an utterance of a single mood, rarely in more than six or ten lines including the refrain. The poet sings of his *lol*, a Kashmiri word signifying an untranslatable complex of love, longing and a tugging at the heart as also (in Walter de la Mare's phrase) of a "longingness—poor mortal longingness." It is an air or song, not an intellectual lyric at all. There is nothing mystical, moral or homiletic about it. It talks of secular and mundane love and not so much of love's exaltation, rapture or ennobling idealism as of its pain and smart, frustration and disillusionment, sadness and sorrow of unrequitted love. Only in Haba Khatoon, sometimes, has this lyric, usually a plaintive wail, wistful and sad, a touch of sensuous gaiety.

Haba Khatoon was not happy at her husband's home though she, on her part, did all she reasonably could to adjust herself to her strange and unsympathetic environment where (the oral tradition tells us) her gift of song and music enraged both her husband and her mother-in-law, who would often rebuke and taunt her. But one thing she could not do even for her own domestic peace ; she could not repress the urge of song in her And whenever she was sent to collect the wild edible plants, dandelion and cress, from the nearby banks and braes, where (as was the wont) she would go along with other village maids, she would burst into woodnotes wild, extempore and apt. This, for instance :

dilnith tso'lham reshe, rwalo myaani poshemadano

You took my heart and fled
without a warning, stealthily.
Come, Love, O come to me.
Come friend, let us in the prime of youth
gather jasmine while we may
He who departs does not return.

I wish you well ; then why delay ?
Come, Love, O come to me.

Come friend, let us to banks and braes
for dandelion and water cress.
Let us heed not what others say.
In rumour and in gossip rude
they slander me : that is my fate.

Who can untie the knot of fate ?
the same fate may overtake them too—
who knows ? Come Love, I wait.

Much ill of me they spoke to him,
his ears have poisoned been ;
and he, the guileless one, believed.
Ah me ! ah me !

When to the river ghat we go,
the whole world lies asleep but me.

I wait and wait the whole night through
for love's message.
I know no rest nor sleep.
O come, my Love, O come to me.

Come, leave estrangements all,
respond to the urgent call of love,
See how I still do yearn for you.
Life is short, we have not long to stay.
Then come, my Love, O come to me.

Thus it came to pass that, while on a certain day she was gathering dandelion and cress out on the upland fields and singing airily, she saw, not very far from her, a handsome young nobleman riding a gaily bedecked horse come to a dead stop and listening intently to the strains of her song and casting love-glances at her. It seems to have been a case of love

at first sight, though she little knew that the young man was no other than the heir-apparent, Prince Yusuf Shah Chak. In a few weeks the Prince arranged her divorce and soon after married her.

She must have remembered then the curious incident which had happened to her not long before. It is said that Haba Khatoon, unhappy and sad in her husband's home, had one day gone to Khwaja Masud, held in great respect at Pampore for his spiritual powers, and, with tears in her eyes, told him her tale of woe and misery. Whereupon he is said to have consoled her with the words that her days of woe would soon be over. It was he who, on this day, had changed her Kashmiri name of birth, "Zoon" (The moon) to "Haba Khatoon" by which name she has ever since become known.

When Yusuf Shah ascended the throne in 1579, Haba Khatoon became the queen of Kashmir. As a queen she not only patronised the arts of her country, gathering round the royal court poets and musicians but also guided the political destiny of the State during a troublesome time. She became a source of strength to her husband the King who, left to himself, was given to revelry and indecision.

It is not, however, as queen but rather as poet and singer of *lol*-lyrics that Haba Khatoon is known to this day. We owe to her a well-known musical composition of our classical music (*sufiana kalaam*) known as *Raast i-Kashmiri*. Our classical music had, by her time, become almost wholly Persianised though some of the earlier Hindustani *shastra sangeet* compositions (*raags*) were still known and perhaps sung though, in the very process of being sung to the accompaniment of the new Irani or Central Asian musical instruments, they had undoubtedly undergone change. It is possible to detect, by internal evidence, interspersed among our books of *mausiqi* (classical music), songs which might be Haba

Khatoon's, songs of passionate longing and rapturous expectation and sensuous gaiety, few and far between no doubt but not very characteristic of the usual *lol*-lyric. This, for instance, beginning

d'yaku'pyat'hu' guma chim dur zan haraan
baal chas karaan kosman kraav...

(My sweat like pearl drop from my brow,
I gather violets for my Love...
I leap for joy
and garlands weave,
I fill wine-cups
and tresses braid,
for Love will come to me.

Or

va'ny dimay aaru'balan
yaara kuni melakhnaa..

(The wild rose is in bloom
and beauty's paragons in their prime...
I'll look for you by brooks and streams
and search the jasmine woods for you).

or,

kar ra'ngim kar vaatyam
karu saamaana vwalo...

(In henna I have dyed my hands,
and wait for Love...)

But it is difficult to be sure, for the books of *mausiqis* do not reveal the poets' name ; the songs are given, both Persian and Kashmiri, but not the names of authors.

Haba Khatoon's days of happy expectation and love's gaiety were, however, soon to end. Her husband and king, Yusuf Shah Chak, the last of the Chak Sultans of Kashmir, was,

largely through subterfuge and deceit, defeated in battle by Akbar, the Great Mughal, and exiled far away from the land of his birth and love. Then in sad songs Haba Khatoon sang of love's bitter frustration, or of her days of carefree childhood, employing common and familiar metaphor to conceal their political undertones. This, perhaps, for instance :

> vantay ve'sy lolan gayimay moori
> vantay baali pooryam kar...
> (Say friend, when will fate smile on me,
> and my love come to me again ?.........)

Or, the song still popular,

> *tsu' kamyoo swani mynaai bram dith nyoonakho.*
> *tse' kihozi ga'yee myaa'ny du'y...*
>
> Who has enticed you, Love,
> what manner of a rival is she ?
> Will you not now persuaded be
> and leave displeasure and come to me ?
> Say, why you feel estranged from me ?
>
> At the dead of night, I opened the gate
> for you to come in awhile.
> I love, you love, then why waste time,
> and why, O why, forsake me thus ?
>
> See, in the crucible of love,
> I burn to ashes, and yearn for you.
> My almond eyes weep copious tears
> for you and only you
> But you avoid the very streets
> that lead you to my gate.
>
> Although a garden-jasmine I,
> in the very prime of bloom,
> yet waste I as the snow in June.

Come in the garden, Love,
come and enjoy the jasmine bloom ;
it blooms for you.

Every morning I prepare
and put on bridal dress
and ornaments
to greet and welcome you.
But you shun me and turn away,
and oh, the pain you give !

Alas ! alas ! for Haba Khatoon,
Did she not serve you well ?
She lost her prime by love unblest... .
a painful memory
which stings her breast.
O come, there is yet time ;
why shun me thus, O come.

The original of this poem is not the only version available. There is another, albeit not altogether different; and to retrieve it from loss, I transliterate it herein below as given in Jagarnath Wali's Zoon.

tsu' kamyoo swani myaani bram dith nyoonakho
tse' kyaah ga'yee maa'ny du'y
tsakh traav du'y malaala me' chukho vwandi tsu'y
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
o'sh chas ba' traavaan tsaale tsaale
me' baali gatsh-ham tsu'y
minimari ca'shmav khoon chas haaraan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
shraavu'ny sheem zan ba' galaan aayas
ho'chmu'e ba' baagu'c hee
conuy baag tay tsu'y vwalo chaavaan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y

tan chas naavaan paan paa'raavaan
haavaan caa'niy dru'y
yaavu'nas panu'nis tshoh chas maraan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
yaaru'bala aaabas buth ti naa hovum
tath cham caa'niy dru'y
raah kyaah lo'dtham chuham konu' tshaaraan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
sontu'kis vaavas ti haal naa bovum
hol chum jigu'ras suy
traa'vith kas path aaham ma'shraavaan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
vasi pyom basinaar su ti haa tsolum
golum tse'y path paan
aa'nthu'ra'sy armaan aayas do'braavaan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y
zooni ro't' daagaah ye'li tsu'y draakho
kaari thaph la'jmo sway
suy dod maru'mati chas lalu'naavaan
tse' kyaah ga'yee myaa'ny du'y

Haba Khatoon's life was one of unusual vicissitudes. From the simple happy days of her precocious youth she was bound to live the soul-deadenning dull days of her first marriage with a stolid yokel. Then came the sudden flowering of love and romance, first as the beloved of a Prince and, later far 16 years, as the Queen of Kashmir and patron of art and music. For the last 20 years of her life separated from her lord and King, and fallen on evil days and evil tongues, she lived her lonely life as a fakir, almost as a wandering minstrel. Here is a short little poem which would well be her own epitaph :

gari baal draayas toory gayas ra'sith

I left my home and stayed away
even when the day sank in the west.

I came of noble parentage
and made a name throughout the land,
and lovers ran mad after me
until the day sank in the west.

I passed through curious crowds,
my veil drawn tight ;
people flocked to catch a sight of me
hermits hurried forth from forest dens.

my shop was stocked full to the brim,
my wares on show ;
but soon I lost my precious wares
and none was there to buy
when the bright day sank in the west.

II

Born in the eighteenth century, nearly two hundred years after Haba Khatoon, A'rnimaal followed in the wake of her tradition and made of the *lol*-lyric still more of a plaintive wail ; and hardly, if ever, have her songs a touch of gaiety. It is a curious coincidence that the three most famous women poets of Kashmiri, separated one from another by intervals of about two centuries each, should have suffered domestic unhappiness at their husbands' homes and thus "learnt in suffering what they sing in song."

A'rnimaal's songs are plaintive and poignant in the pathos, helplessness and resignation to fate which they express. But they are entirely free from malice and there is an undercurrent of quiet fortitude characteristic of the age-long suffering of a Hindu woman, widow or unhappily married. From all accounts and oral tradition as well as the internal evidence of her songs themselves, there seems to be little doubt that she was deeply wronged by her talented husband, Munshi Bhawani Das Kachroo, who is justly famous as the writer of Persian *bahar-i-taveel*, a series of poetic prose hymns in praise

of God. There seems to be little doubt also that she, deserted and maltrated by her husband, lived at her father's home for long spells of time and took to the chastening discipline of the spinning-wheel.

> guu'n guu'n mo kar haa ye'ndu'ro
> kanu'ryan pha'lilay malu'yo
> rabi manzu' kaa'r tul haa so'mbulo
> ye'mbu'rzal pyaala hyath praaraan chay
> hee gatshi bara ta dubaara phwaliyo
> guu'n guu'n mo kar haa ye'ndu'ro
>
> Murmur not, my spinning-wheel,
> thy straw-rings I will oil.
> From under the sod, O Hyacinth,
> raise thy stately form.
> For, look, the Narcissus is waiting
> with cups of wine for you.
> The jasmine will not bloom again,
> when once it fades away.

Lal Ded was born and bred in the country-side and so was Haba Khatoon ; and they had a freer access to the glories of nature in a country where nature is full of glory. A'rnimaal was born and brought up in the capital city of Srinagar and married into a family in the neighbouring suburb of Rainawari. Largely owing to its proximity to the famous Dal lake and thinner population at the time, with the lake inlets and greenery breaking into the very bazaars and streets, Rainawari must then have been even more of an idyllic place than it is now ; and it is perhaps on this account that we find in A'rnimaal's songs a freshness as of the country air. Nor do we find in her, even at this late stage, any hackneyed imagery and conceit to be met with soon after her in Kashmiri poetry.

> haa vwalo mo'ny bo vandu'yo paadan
> aadan baaji myaani raayove

aadu'nu' aa'su's renzalu' naadaan
yaavu'nas kadu'r no zonuy me
ditu'mo darshun cham caa'ny laadan
aadan baaji myaani raayove

kukile puu'ry kavu' traavith kwalu'raadan
dukale vwandu' myon gav
me' kale caane braa'nty gaa'mo naadan
aadan baaji myaani raayove

tsento lad'arposh pho'ly kwalu'raadan
az chum aadan vatu'haa'may
diha'may darshan sar vanday paadan
aadan baaji myaani raayove

(O sharer of my youthful dreams,
my Love, companion of my youth,
I will lay at your lotus feet
the very apples of mine eyes.

When young I was a foolish girl,
with trinkets I did play
and did not prize my youth.
But now I pine
for Love, who shared my youthful dreams.

Like a kokil-dove you move
along the wandering rills.
Distraction fills my heart and I,
by love beguilen,
fancy you are calling me
O Love of youthful dreams.

Think of the dark red flower
of reed and water-rush.
This is the time I look for you.
Will you not come when bloom is come
at dark red flower time ?

There is often a complete fusion of music and meaning, of sound and sense, in her song ; and we can hear her penny-whistle blowing sweet, though troubled, music ;

myaani madan hiyo hiyo
cham caa'ny laadan
aadana tse'y suu'ty karyaam vaaday
vaada kava d'olham piyo piyo
cham caa'ny laadan*

There is a delicate poignancy in the songs which express her frustration at love's indifference and infidelity.

1. padmaani adu'kar yiyamtay
   vadu'nas chum na tshyan
   o'sh chas traavaan tsaale tsaale
   mashi kar cham trahan
   lashi-naaru' zaajnas myoolum o'sh taan
   vadu'nas chum na tshyan

2. as may ve'sy myon hyoo kas gav
   yas gav masvali gwandur havaa'y
   robu'khaanu' bihith da'ry-cas t'has gom
   zonum osh maa aangan tsaav
   yaar nay d'yooshum vaa'linji tsas gom
   yas gav masvali gwandur havaa'y

Her frustration, however, never hardens into hatred. Compared with her, Haba Khatoon is more impassioned, even sensuous. She can be quickened by the joyous expectancy of love and when provoked, can call down a curse on her rivals e. g.,

"timan ti myon hyoo gatshe"
(May the same fate overtake them too !)

---

* For the translation of this and other songs, please to the chapter entitled *Kashmiri Lyrics*.

But A'rnimaal can invoke a blessing for her disloyal Love :

1. vanu'kas ve'siye swanu' cham gelaan
   ye'nu' yaa'ry traa'vnam karu'ny kath
   she'yi yaar aa'sy-tan pooshtan pardyan
   toti cham vwandu'su'y sath

   (who is as miserable as I ?
   He does not even speak to me,
   They taunt me but I wish him well :
   May he live long
   and give them joy !
   The thought that he is happy and well
   sustains me still.)

2. me' shoku' yaaru'su'ndi ba'ry mas-pyaalata
   aahee neetose

   kandu'tay naabodu' barymas thaalata
   rangu'rangu' neetose
   jod gav aashkan dod kitha tsaalata
   aalav deetose
   taru'vu'ni maru'ge vasu'vu'ni baalata
   aalav deetose
   kyaah kara niyinam haru'nu'ni tshaalata
   aalav deetose

   (I have filled cups on cups for Love,
   go and cry out to him.
   I have filled plates with sugar loaves
   many and various.
   Love's witchery enthrals. How can
   I anguish bear and set me free ?
   Go and cry out to him.

   Across hillsides and meadows green
   I send him tender thoughts.
   Like deer he roams the woods afar

and leaves me here to grieve.
Go and cry out to him.

As shown above, it is possible, by careful scrutiny of internal evidence, to ascribe the authorship of some of our *mausiqi* songs to Haba Khatoon and A'rnimaal, though there can be no doubt about at least a few of them which unquestioned tradition has all along accepted as theirs. 'A'rnimaal", for instance, literally interpreted, means in Kashmiri "the Garland of A'rni-Rose", the wild pale yellow rose common in the countryside. She weaves a delicate imagery out of her own name, and this song has been attributed to her without question.

a'rnirang gom shraavu'ny hiye
kar yiye darshun diye

kandu'naabada aaradmutuy
phandu'ka'rith tso'lum ko'tuy
khandu' ka'ry-nam lookan thiye
kar yiye darshan diye

suli vwathav sangarmaalan
laala tshaaron kohan ta baalan
praaran chas ba' tahnze ziye
kar yiye darshun diye

(A summer jasmine I had bloomed
but now have turned a yellow rose.
When will my Love come unto me ?
I treated him to candy sweet,
he took my heart and I was duped.
Now he is gone, and I am made
a laughing stock for all to see.
Will no one tell him what I feel ?

Let us arise at early dawn

and seek my Love
on hills and mountains high.
I wait and wait expectantly,
when will my Love come unto me ?

In this very quiet fortitude and resignation, A'rnimaal's songs breathe a note of dissatisfaction, if not revolt, against the age-old custom which condemned the Hindu woman irremediably to an unhappy marriage and disloyal love.

Paramanand

It is as marvellous a coincidence as it is profoundly significant that, across distance of space and time and in spite of divergence of country, race, religion and cultural environment, all mystics everywhere, with the inevitable difference in idiom and some slight shift of emphasis, agree on certain basic facts of experience on which their beliefs and philosophy are built. This experience is ineffable, not a sensory-intellectual experience at all ; it is the apprehension of an ultimate nonsensous unity in all things, a Oneness or a One to which neither the senses nor the reason has access. The One is at the bottom of the self as well as the external world. And what some mystics call the One, others often identify with God ; and the experience of the undifferentiated Unity is interpreted as the Union with or nearness to God, wherein one's own individuality either "melts away" or is exalted into the Boundless Being. This brings with it an exalted peace, blessedness and joy, and also a burning love of God which, in most mystics, overflows in the form of love of fellow-men.

In the idiom of Hindu mystical tradition the ultimate Ground of all that is, the Reality, is a unity in diversity. The One alone is the Real, though sages call It variously : *ekam sat vipra bahuda vadante*, is the earliest statement of this mystic truth in the *Rig Veda*.

> There is *satvic (*higher) knowledge. Learn thou it is this :
> To see one indestructible Being in all beings,
> And in all the manifold shapes, one Inseparable.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥

The Gita-XVIII, 20.

As an inevitable corollory, the Hindu believes that in whatsoever way men approach God even so does He bless them, for the paths men take from every side reach Him.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तंते मनुष्या पार्थ सर्वशः ।।

The Gita-IV, II.

"There are" says Plotinus, "different roads by which this end [the apprehension of the Infinite] may be reached : the love of beauty, which exalts the poet ; that devotion to the One and that ascent of science which makes the ambition of the philosopher ; and that love and those prayers by which some devout and ardent soul tends in its moral purity towards perfection. These are the great highways conducting to that height about the actual and the particular where we stand in the immediate presence of the Infinite, who shines out as from the deeps of the soul". While, therefore, the ways of approach to God are many, as many as the forms or aspects of the One-Infinite, the Hindu mystic has recognised the three highways of *jnana*, *karma*, and *bhakti*, psychologically corresponding to the triune aspect of the human mind, cognition, conation, and emotion. Of these *bhakti* may will be the first step, but it is certainly also the last ; for by devotion man knows God in essence, and having known Him thus, he enters into the Supreme.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनंतरम ।।

The Gita-XVIII, 55.

These are, if we may call them so, the philosophical contents of Paramanand's poetry ; but he is a bhakti mystic and the quest of human soul for God and of God for the human soul is the predominant underlying theme or, in Tillyard's significant phrase, the great commonplace of his poetry. It is not stated directly as a philosopher would but expressed

as a poet would, "obliquely" in, what is universally recognised as the language both of mystics as well as of poets, the language of symbol and allegory. The human soul pursues God and God pursues the human soul in a perpetual *raas lila* or dance-play. This is the central theme which Paramanand works out in his three longer poems, *Radhasvyamvara*, *Sudama Charitra*, and *Siva Lagan*. His poetry, like that of other mystic poets, intimately bound up with his beliefs ; and, bred and brought up in Hindu mystic tradition as he was, it is built round the beliefs and mystic practices, symbolism and allusions, of Hindu mysticism.

2

Philosophy, albeit mystical, is not however, poetry. It becomes poetry only when the poet's imagination "bodies forth the forms of things" (that is, ideas and experiences incarnated) and "turns them to shapes". A verse from the Mathnawi of Jalal-ul-Din Rumi (Nicholson's Translation, edited by Professor Arberry)—

> "Vision increases the power of speech ;
> the inspired speech makes the vision more penetrating"—

very tersely but equally very profoundly states the relation between mystical experience and its expression as poetry. Neither the doctrine, the elements of a system or philosophy, nor the attitude of reverence or the language of piety, nor even its purpose of moral instruction or spiritual edification, would of itself transmute mystical or sacred verse into poetry unless it had the qualities of vision, inspiration and power. But these qualities are rare; and in the vast body of sacred verse of any country or language the poets whose mystical poems have the authentic ring of spiritual inspiration, whose mystical vision, in the significant words of Rumi, has penetration and whose speech has power—such poets are like angels' visits, few and far between.

Mysticism is a dominant theme in Kashmiri poetry ; and right from the early beginnings in the thirteenth or the fourteenth century, from Shiti Kantha's *Mahaanay Prakash* and Lal Ded's *Vaakh* upto the lila lyrics of Krishna Razdan of Vanpoh in the second decade of the present century, and the *sufi* songs of Ahad Zargar of the present day, we have produced note-worthy mystical poets, both Hindus and Muslims : Sheikh Noor-ud-Din of Tsrar-i Sharif, Khwaja Habibullah Navshehri, Rupa Bhawani, Qalandar Shah, Shah Gafoor, Swach Kraal, Rahim Sahib, Shukur Rishi, Rahman Daar, Shams Faqir, Aziz Darwesh, Wahab Khar of Shaar, Mirza Kak of Hangal gund, Asad Pare of Hajin, Waza Mahmud, Haqqani, Samad Mir, Ahad Zargar, and numerous other poets, little known and unknown. But much of what even some of the noteworthy among these poets have written is unequal in merit, at its average best didactic and homiletic, albeit popular on account of wise saws and pithy sayings ; it is instructional in character and largely imitative of Persian mystical poets, borrowing not only the ideas but also the epithets and phrases, often stale enough, and also their imagery, symbolism and conceit : while at times it is even inferior stuff, sentimental, platitudinous, morbidly gloomy, and even obscure. But there are remarkable exceptions in quite a few of the poems written by the poets I have named and a few more anonymous, and centainly almost everything which is genuine Lal Ded. I say 'genuine' because much spurious mystical verse is erroneously attributed to her. In her passionate apprehension, authenticity of experience, travail of soul, penetrating vision, and the energy of her idiom and terse imagery, Lal Ded's mystical quatrains are among the best of their kind. And there is Paramanand.

3

Nand Ram (1791-1885)*, better known by his penname

* For a fuller account see *Paramananda, Vol. I.* by Zinda Kaul to whom every lover of Paramananda owes a debt of gratitude.

Paramanand, was the son of Krishna Pandit, and was born in his father's village Seer, seven miles from Mattan, a famous pilgrimage-place on the way to Sri Amaranath Cave. His mother, Saraswati, came from Mattan where his father was a patwari and where he himself later made his permanent home. Seer has a sacred spring, a shrine of the goddess Saraswati, where young Nand Ram worshipped, though at a later date he seems to have shifted his devotions to Motner Bharga Shikha, a shrine sacred to Durga, picturesquely situated on top of a hill which forms the background of the famous Mattan Springs.

Bharga-ruu'p nav Durga tsu' maan
Swargalooku'ky chi ta'tythu'y namaan
Isht'adeevee che' panu'nee pramaan
man thyar karu poozun Pro'bhoo

Cling in steadfast faith unto Nav Durga,
in her *Bharga* aspect as Resplendent Light,
Whom the dwellers of Heaven worship,
none other than our own *Ishtadevi*,
Whom we must worship as our own Goddess.
Steady thy mind and worship the Lord.

The streamlets and springs set in relief with the adjoining hills of the pretty village of Mattan must have stirred in Paramanand his sense of the beautiful and the musical ; and to this we owe some very charming devotional lyrics sung extempore by him. He seems to have been fond of music and himself played on the sitar in accompaniment to his songs. Life at Mattan must also have brought him into contact with sadhus coming from outside Kashmir ; and his poems reveal his familarity with *Bhagvatpurans* and *Sivapurana, the Mahabharata,* Shatcakra Upasana and Kundalini Yoga, and the broad principles of Vedanta and Shaivism. He is also said to have intently listened to the recitations of *Guru Granth Saheb* by a Sikh Sadhu. This, apart from evoking in him piety and devo-

tion has left its imprint in several songs with which his *Radhasvyamvara* is interspersed. These songs are written in, what may be called, Punjabi Hindi as, for instance.

मन कसा तन मथुरा होंदा ।
कृशा आत्मा हृदि गोकल रहंदा ।
नारद विवेक सच सनिया देंदा ।
खेल में फैल पयो नन्दलाला ।

These songs are at times so amusing that I am reinforced in my opinion that Paramanand could not have missed their being so and with a wry smile of amusement let them be e, g.,

सदके बुलाओ उसको सदके सदके
क्या आना तदके मर जाना जदके ।

We find little reference in his poems to the events of his own life except where he bemoans his lonely helplessness in old age, as in

kun ta keeval ta saa'r soormu'ts aash
ne'po'tu'r ta ne'tran roodmut na gaash
conuy o'n ta tsu'y atha rat'anas
caah ti conuy yo'd yima phat'anas
Alone and lonely, and in despair,
childless, with eyesight nearly lost—
I am Thy blind man, Lord! and Thou
alone to lead me by the hand ;
For should I stumble into a pit,
The pit too, I should know, is Thine.

Paramanand, it may be mentioned, had two sons and two daughters but neither of his sons survived him ; one of them died at a very early age while the other died young, leaving a widow behind. He is said to have received quite a few scoldings from his wife, Maalded, who certainly did not look up to him, an other-worldly-minded man with any reverence or awe.

There is, however, remarkably little discontent in his poetry, there is no gloom and certainly no despair ; the only wail is of a God-lover's wail of separation from his God

At the death of his father, when he was twenty-five, he succeeded to the village *Patwaar* and, till he resigned many years later, he was the village patwari : but he seems to have lived radiantly happy in his poverty unmindful of his wife's scorn and scolding, and to have retained the sanity of humour to satirize his own profession. This is what he says about one Radhoo Mal Mishra, a petty Revenue Official of the day :

> Misra ehu be-nwakhta Rod
> vwany chukh yi daa'dis dod
> bihith chuh Wulrizan
> haaran chuh tulrizan
> Mattan che' khaa'hish tas
> pat'hwaa'ry diny dharmas
> thaaran chi gaaran kas
> va'ny tav yi ba'hee kyaah
> gayi na sahih zaah

> A line without a dot is Misra Radhoo Mal,*
> a calamity on top of calamities.
> Encamped at Wular Lake, he fulminates,
> blowing hornets from his mouth.
> "In Mattan he, our officer, intends
> to make at *shraadh* a gift of patwaris,
> so many heads—than cattle cheaper far—
> whom will he please to choose?" they trembling ask.
> Say, will the revenue record of
> the patwaris be ever right ?

There is also the incident when he had to carry a sheep for a Revenue Official all the way from Mattan to Khanabal seven miles, which provoked a popular devotional poem beginning :

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*Written in Perso-Arabic characters it would be راڈھو مل مصرعه without any dotted letter.

traahi maam traahe paahe muraa'ree
kat'a sankat'a hee mukat'adaa'ree
Save me, O save me, Lord,
from this dire calamity,
(this sheep laden on my back)—

where we have a pun on "kat'a sankat" which may, translated literally, mean "the sheep-calamity' or merely a dire calamity.

Paramand's genius flowered rather late, but when he heard the call, it was unmistakable and there was no denying it. "Listen," he expostulates with himself, "Saraswati Herself is speaking to you" (*kan thav Saraswati chay vanan*). He resigned his patwaar and gave up his days to practical mysticism, his *upasana* and yoga; and gathered round himself a band of devoted disciples among them Lakshman Raina "Bulbul" of Naagam, a poet in his own right, and Saheb Ganai the Lambardar, who helped to keep him above want. He died at a ripe old age of 93 in 1936 (Bikrimi), the date obtained from *abjad* reckoning of the poet Bulbul's Persian chronogram verse :

بلبل کشیر ناله بدل گفت هاں ز دم
با هوے و هاے ساز که گلشن خزاں گرفت

4

Paramanand's poems may roughly be divided into shorter poems and longer poems. The shorter poems comprise the *stotras*, hymns or songs of praise to Sri Ganesha, Sri Rajna Devi, Siva and others deities; poems that are predominantly didactic or instructional in theme for the edification of the spiritual aspirant; lila-lyrics, many of them interspersed among the three longer poems; and what mav be called, the purely mystical poems, fruits of his life long *sadhana* and self-realization. It is probably right to say that this order of classification according to their theme is also their chronological order. He is also said to have, at an early age, tried his hand

at Persian verse under the pen-name of "Gharib" but none of these exercises are extant.

The *stotras* are inferior as poetry. In them there is no note of exaltation, no revelation ; they usually sing praises of the deities asking for a true direction of the will and for stength to be able to resist the temptations of the world. The devotee prays to Sri Ganesha to awaken him and not let him sleep the sleep of ignorance ; or he prays to Lord Siva to rescue him from the whirlpool of the mundane world and to ferry him across the ocean of becoming. In some of them the poet sometimes speaks in the effete metaphor of the contemporary love poetry in which the lover suffers the smart and burns of love and the scorn and ridicule of others, and indeed, in which he is "turned into ashes in love's hot oven". Or, he longs to meet the Lord as the woman lover of the poetry of his time longs to meet her love, who left her ' early in the morning, turning her heart upside down. She would rub saffron and sandal oil on his soft limbs, and, ah ! she, a Jassamine, would unite in an embrace with her Honey-Bee.',

1. vuzanaavtam paavtam ma ne'ndu'ro
2. aavalana valanay aas maayaaye
   karu'naavi taaru'naav naad kar naaye
   yavu'tava yava bavasara tara...
3. shaama neerith gom subahan
   duba vaa'linj cham pheran
   huba vandahas dwan paadan
   kwang tsandun koomul angan
   rangarivnas mala hani hani
   hiy bo'mburas laaga tani tan

These are obviously early attempts, and there are not many of them ; and even in these few the poet looks inwards and locates the deities within himself : The god Ganesha is the sovereign lord of the *Caturdala Mandala* while the god Siva is

the rising sun of the *dvaadashaanta mandala*. In quite a few of them there is poignancy and pathos and sometimes a convincing personal note.

a) ye'tsykol tse' ta me' dooryar
kyatha zo'ruth yith ko'ruth na pooryar
ada kar yi za't' ye'li praane
Aanandagana t'aathi myaane
osus zal bo'y nyarmal
muhu'kut'h-ka'shy ko'rnam tshal
vacinam kitshu' sheenu'maane
Aanandagana t'aat'hi myaane

b. aay aam soran paayas paav tam
balara'st kaay na ta palazyam kath
bujiras d'ola, atha rat'u'naavtam
haavtam pananee Ishvara gath
chum khasun koh matu' losu'naavtam
khasu' kor vasu' kor bront'ha tay path
rasa rasa panu'nee vati paku'naavtam...

Another, but not a very clear-cut, group of his poems is predominantly didactic in theme. In them we find a near conciseness of expression and perspicuity : ideas, albeit commonplace, so expressed as to make them memorable. To illustrate:

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a) We have long been seperated from each other. How couldst thou bear separation, O Darling, O Bliss Incarnate ? How long, O Lord how long ? By then this body with have decayed I was a pure limped stream but frost has bouud me fast and turned me into *icy* avalanches.

b. I am growing old, my weak body can no longer serve me, and unless thou lead me by the hand, I shall totter helplessly. I have yet to climb the mountain and the day is about to set and I cannot see my way, before or behind me. Let not my day set so soon, O Lord ; and direct my feet on the path that leads to Thee.

c) paraa'deen murkha boz lwaku'caar chuy
yaavanas manz kaamuk andu'kaar chuy
bujiras na hyaknuk sankalpu'baar chuy
kar tsu' pwarshikaar, kas tsu' pwarshikaar
phut'u'haar laari na yo'd suu'ty khaar chay
aa's vaahraavith naphsu'ny gaar chay
praalabdaho'l soorith patay laar chay
grat'a anvaar. grat'a anvaar.

d) band kus chuh yas chuh ve shyiraag
mwakalyov kus ye'my tath ko'r tyaag
panu'nuy chuh band paan'nuy mwaku'jaar

she'thu'r kam chih panu'nee ye'ndryay
me'thu'r timay ye'li ka'ryzyakh zay
kuni chiy zal timay ta kuni chiy naar

---

c) O foolish man, listen : in childhood you are dependent on others, in manhood, you are led astray by the dark forces of carnal desires ; and in all age, you are weighed down by weakness and physical incapacity. Therefore, make a manly resolution betimes. If you are the owner of riches, know that not a *cowri* will go with you ; that desire is limitless, an endless cave ; that even when the fruits of the past karmas have been reaped, there can be no end to karma. Therefore a manly resolution betimes, for you will have to take your turn at the mill.

d) Who is a slave ? He who is attached to the world.
Who is free ? He who renounces attachment.
Slavery is one's own : Freedom is one's own.
Who are the enemies ? One's own indriyas.
Who are the friends ? Even they when one has conquered them.
Now they act as water and now as fire.
Who is poor ? He who has long desire.
Who is rich ? He who is contented.
Be contented and enter the abode of bliss.
What is the means to godliness ?
Love of God, renouncing all formula and ritual,
restraint, contentment, right thought and company of good men.

daryadu'r kus yas che' tre'shna zeet'h
la'khymeevaan yus chuh santooshiteeth
santwasht'h roz praav aanandu'dwaar

brahmu'gath praavanas kyaa sana heeth
reeth traa'vith bar tsu' tamicee preeth
sham santoosh satsang ta vyecaar

There are three other poems which belong to this genre and deserve a particular mention. First, the poem on Amaranath Yaatraa the famous pilgrimage, which starts from Srinagar to the cave of Sri Amaranath. It is significant for the dexterity with which the poet interweaves the pilgrim's progress from one sacred shrine to another with the yogic pilgrimage within one's own self plexus to plexus. The keynote is struck in the very first verse: In the cave of the body Satchidananda is the Phallus, seated unattached and desireless on the inmost pedestal of mind which people call the cave of Kailaash. The pilgrim has to discover and reach this goal. He starts from Ganpatyar, in the heart of Srinagar (Sri Ganesha the lord of *mulaadvaar*, very close to one's own self); thence to Shuraahyar (Brahma at Svaadisht'haan); then through the labyrinth of the Jhelum at Shivapura (the maze of *Kuudalini*) to Sangam. (*dashd'al*) and Maamal at Pahalgam and many other stages to Sheshnag (the domain of Ishvara) and to Panchatarani (the five Karmas and *Jnana Indriyas*); up Mount Bhairave (the Ego) to the Amaravati (the Stream of Immortality), thence to Lord Siva's abode, where the pilgrim must surrender himself and all, leaving aside other gods and goddesses. No translation summary can, however, indicate the unhindered movement of the poem or its successful interweaving of

allegory and fact with the pilgrimage, and I must quote a few lines from the original.

Yaatraa

man thyar kar poozun Prabhoo

dihigwaphi Satchitaanandalyang
manu'peet'has pyat'h byoot'h ne'sang
lukh dapu'nas Kailaasa shrwang......
gwad'a Ganpatyaaruk Ganeesh
door mo zaan roozith chu neesh
mulaadaaru' daaru'kuy Maheesh
swaadisht'haana 8huraahyaar
shat'hdal shat'hmwakh zan Kumaar
Shivpaari pheri Kund'alinee
pheru'vun praan tati zalu'kanee
sath samandar sa'ny vwagu'nee......
naabiveshi dashid'ala Sangmas
yim tsaay lukh satsangamas
Krishnas thaavarzangamas......
ka'j traa'vith vaat Tha'jvor
la'j tati Shivajat'u' tswapor
anaahatu'mand'u'las thaav tsu' khor.. ...
kant'hudeesh yus chuh tswadaah bavan
Neelu'gangi pyath boz Vavajan
tavu'tor pavanu'y ot davan
ma'nzil chi man'z man'z vaaryaah
akrayaadaaru'cee yi kre'yaa......
Ishu'deesh vwatam Sheeshu'naag
hyaku'khay tsu' ta'ty dyan tu' raath zaag
raag trav praav mahaavairaag
renzla traa'vith Renzu'pal
paa'vith nishaanas mo tsu' d'al
dharmas ta karmas chu sor phal

tyaag paa'ntsu'krath paa'tsu'y tarang
sath samandaru' kuny tse'th tarang
padmanaabas chim yim ti rang
asta asta khasta pantsaalu'su'y
sooham Bhairav baalu'su'y
tw'akh yuth na lagiy tati laalu'su'y
zinda roz boz zinday marun
garbayaatraayi apor tarun
suu'tee chu tatee Shiva darshun...
baav Amaraava'tee tsu' naau
mal babooth chal grahastu'baav
Shivapaadan paan pushraav...
gwaphi manz gwaphi vaat panu'ne
traav deevee tu' divv'taah ane...
man thyar kar poozun Prabhoo

This is a remarkable allegory of place names. Even more remarkable is the allegory of farming in *Karmabhoomikaa* (The Field of Action) Both poems are written in *vatsan* form, in -line stanzas, the fourth line being a refrain throughout the poems. The rhyme-schemes are, however, different. In *yaatraa*, the first three lines of every stanza have the same rhyme while the refrain does not rhyme with them e.g., *aaaR*. *bbbR*, *cccR* and so on. The refrain

man thyar kar poozun Prabhoo
(Steady the mind and worship the Lord).

In *Karmabhoomikaa*, the first two lines of each stanza rhyme together, while the third line of every stanza rhymes with the refrain e. g., *aaRR*, *bbRR*, *ccRR* and so on. The refrain is appropriate to a farming allegory :

santooshi byaali bavi aanandaphal
(Contentment's seed brings forth the crop of bliss).

Both poems are written to be sung in chorus as *Chakri* songs,

but this, the second of the three poems, *Karmabhoomikaa*, is the more popular poem with its more familiar and easily intelligible farming techniuqe and technical terms, and its impressive exhortation e. g.,

> Manure thy field of action with
> the loam of righteousness,
> then sow the seed of contentment
> to reap thy crop of bliss.
> Plough on both day and night
> with the oxen of twin breath,
> drive them relentlessly and hard
> with the lashings of the *kumbaka* whip.
> Rest not lest any patch of the field
> remains unploughed.

The third poem is less known. It is about a long-standing dispute between the Tree and the Shadow ; and they come to the Sun asking him to arbitrate. The Shadow complains that the Tree stands between her and the Sun ; but the Tree replies that she owes her very existence to him, and should he leave his place, she will cease to exist. "But suppose," says she, "I wish to see the truth of it for myself ;" and presently when the Sun shines through the branches of the Tree, she feels her lips going dry out of the fear of death. Then she realizes that she cannot see the Sun apart from the Tree.

Now (asks the poet) what are the Sun, the Tree, and the Shadow ? The Sun is the Reality, beyond all form and yet the sustenance and support of all that is. The Tree is the whole, the three-*guna* manifestation of the *nirguna* Reality, the *bhupa* of the Vedas. The Shadow is the Jiva, a semblance of consciousness, its reflection or shadow. The triple world is the Body and the Lord is its Soul.

V

Before I proceed, I shall consider a fact of importance arising out of the three poems I have refered to viz., *The Pilgrimage*, *The field of Action* and *The Tree and the Shadow*. Poetry is form and, as Mallarme said, it is not written with ideas, it is written with words : and, to my mind, a poet's diction is a real mark and test of his poetry.

Paramanand's diction, in Pandit Zinda Kaul's phrase, is "Hindu Kashmiri, that is to say basic Kashmiri with frequent use of Persian and Arabic words". At another place in his extremely well-written introduction to *Paramananda - Sukti-Sara*, he refers to Paramanand's taking to writing "on religious and philosophical subjects in Sanskritised Kashmiri". This may not. however, be accepted without important reservations. Writing *stotras* or speaking of *cakras* and *mandalas*, Paramanand used "Hindu Kashmiri" as, Aziz Dervish for instance, used "Muslim Kashmiri in speaking of *habs*, *nahan-u-aqrab*, *analhaq*, *fana-fil-hah*. Paramanand did not go out of his way to seek and find "Sanskritised Kashmiri" ; it was very much there, part and parcel of the common speech. He did not Sanskritise Kashmiri He could not, even if he would, for the good reason that he knew little or no Sanskrit, and the only language he had learnt at the *maktab* with the mulla was Persian. He has left in his own handwriting, a copy of the Persian translation of the Upanishad, the *Upanikhet*. His family tradition was also of Persian, not Sanskrit, literature ; his father has left in his own hand a copy of *the Mahabharata* in Persian. That is why he uses Sanskrit words or words of Sanskrit origin as they were used in common speech, that is. not as a Pandit would use them but as they were already adapted to the peculiar phonetics and syntax of his native tongue as, to take an extreme example, in the bead-roll of names with which he very impressively begins his *Sudama Charitra*.

neetishakti suu'ty chukh naanaaruu'pay

kheeru' samandru'manzu' sheetu'duu'pay
vaasu'deevu'-mwakhu' be'yı shankarshanay
pre'dyamnu' anirwadu' shwadu, nyarmalay
syadu' bwadu' vyadu' shwabu' mangalay
zan kavu' zaanu'nay tse' nyaran'zanay

May I ask : what else should he have done ? Should he have used Perso-Arabic words which, in any case, would have only been circumlocutory, not equivalent. And, if he should have done so, would it have been poetically appropriate in the context ? No Muslim poet in a similar context has so acclimatised Perso-Arabic words as Paramanand did the Sanskrit words, which he had to use.

Apart from the occasions when such words are the only words to use, Paramanand's diction is remarkable for the bold use of language common in the countryside and for the abundance of images drawn from homely, things and incidents familiar among the rural community. It is never strained, never stilted, not drawn from book-learning but racy of the soil and rich in metaphor.

Karmaboomikaa

karmaboomikaayi dizi dharmuk bal
santooshi byaalı bavi aanandu'ɪhal
dwayi praanu' daandu'-joorv dyan ta rath vaay
kumbaka kuru' zoru' timu'nu'y laay
hila kar yuth na beet'h rozi kaanh ryal...
loluki alu'phaalu' tulu'naa'vith
daa'ru' yat'u'phiri datu' phutu'raa'vith
vaa'ruk sreh yuth na rozyas tal...
vyatsaaru' ba't'hy ta beru' ladith kyath
vath shrootsu'raa'vith yanu'dyavu'[1] shro'ts
samu'dre'sht'i paatjan[2] adu' pheri zal

1· lwaku'ty kwand' yaa hoz yiman manz pony chu samaan 2, lwakci jwayi

sont chuy doh taaru' mo't yaavun
nazi pazi saathaah raavu'raavun
vav byol mo praar karu mangal ..
tro'prith phuru'naayi[3] naamy[4] vud'ar
srehake rabi tsaku' suu'tin bar
yendre'v gagu'ran karu vat'hal
ba'khu'tsh-hu'ndi nyandupheru' saadu'naayi kheety
he'li neri tapu'ke papu'sagu' suu'ty
sambaavu'naayi bhwali pamposhi d'al...
veshiye pa'shy vaaru' rachinaavakh
timu'nu'y athi yuth na kheety khyaavakh
baavu'ci raavu'ci[5] ner ne'shkal...
he'li ye'li papi te'li saa'mpu'nyas kraav
vaa'raagu' draati suu'ty loony loony traav
sambandu'rost maa'vy laavyan val...
mat'ikhasu'nu'ci razi mat'i mati saar
saadu'ni a'nyzyakh baa'y band ta yaar
ne'tinemu' sumrani adu' sami khal...
tre'gwanu'tyaagu'nom[6] akh gwan lad
nyarmaanu' praavakh nyarvaanu'pad[7]
sami tyath tam dith karu kwashal...
dyaanu'daaru'naayi vaanu'mo'nd' vyastaar
gyaanu'daanu' khaasu' khaasu' gaasu'nishi tsaar
manu'ke anu'bavu' vaaru' dis chal[8]...
tyaagu'ke athu'suu'ty vaaru' chwambu'naav
pro'n ta zag phut'u'jan byo'n byo'n thav
zaagi roz laagu'ney traavith zwal...
toolith thaav adu' ambu'ran maal
soohamu'-haayaku'[9] suu'ty nakhu' vaal

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3. gagar vaa'j ta zisy. 4. vasu'vu'ny, d'alvaan. 5. raa'ch
6. saa'ty-su'y khalas banaav aku'y gwan, ywasu' na byo'n byon gwanyan manz baa'graavnu' aamu,ts aasi, ywasu' tre'n gwanau vwala'ngith aasi—ti zan gav, tre'yav gwanav thod aas yimav yi kentshaah chu ti chukh vo'lmut. 7 nirvana padvi
8. lori suu'ty yuth laavi manzu' soru daani pathar pe'yi. 9. trakri

lvati bor vaatu'naa'vith khanu'bal ..
shama dama yama nema gaat'h vaatu'naav...
shaantu'-shradaayi zala paku'naav naav
paanas shihlith Maanasbal
raagu'naayi-vaali, maal aagas taar
khaa'ly yuth na rozi kaal'y jaa'girdaar
phaa'zil ta baakay neri kas tal .
tsaa'rith be'yi byol santsyath thav
sont ye'li yiyi te'li phali phali vav
vwapu'kaaru' vwapu'nay[10] na'vy nav'y thal...
yoogu'maayaayihund boogee aas
yee chay duy tas rost tee kaas
saadu'naav pyo'y tay swaadu'[11] mo d'al...
ka maphal soru'nay gwaru'shabday
santsyatu'-karu'm maan praalabday
karmakaand'u' gyaanu' neri naaru'vuzmal...
sooham-prakaashu'ki vegnyaanay
traa'vith maan be'yi abimaanay
praa'vith roz dwaadu'shaantu'manda'l...
Paramaanand os za'meendaar
hoorith maal tas roozu's na laar
vaangu'c vaaric tsa'jis gaangal
santsoshi bvaali bavi aanandu' phal

I have quoted the poem in full because it is a remarkable poem for the intimate welding of the farmer's round of duties with the spiritual aspirant's *sadhana*, a welding effected through the alchemy of metaphor Incidentally, the poem also gives us a picture of the relationship between the tenant farmer, the landless labourer, and the landlord of his days.

On an allied theme he wrote a short poem at the request of Wahab Khaar of Shaar (Khrew) in, what Pandit Zinda Kaul would call, "Muslim Kashmiri". I quote it here even to show

10. vwapu'du'nay. 11. panu'ni hani nishi.

that, but for the inevitable different mystical terms, symbols and allusions, the language of these two poems is drawn from the same current speech of the day.

paa'tsu'tru'y baaglis karaardaadas
vaadas zyaada na zi kam
karu'khay go'ngul navaabaadas
praani haatsi tulu'nay na nam
khwadaabad kar mo praar kaadas[1]...
phikri-tongu' manu'kis naagu'raadas
zikri neri aabi zam zam
jaan dyun Sheereeni ta'ty Farhaadas...
tsakh traa'vith, traaw tsakh kamaadas
nayimanzu' labakh zeeru'bam
kamu'lyo, kamu'vith vaatakh swaadas...
kamaav hosh thaav duu'shi phasaadas
re'shi, ami ru'shi nishi tsam
bedaad kyaah gay tas shadaadas...
dyavu' vwany Waahab vaatyam daadas
daa'dis diyam marham
yas din tas yin toray naadas...
dilsaa'phee pazi mard-i-aazaadas
Nandu'su'y che' bandu'gee kam
daadas vaat vaatu pha'ry-yaadas
vaadas zyaada na zi kam

Parmaanand uses his native colloquial idoim with effect and verve, and there is a terse pointedness and a proverbial ring about numerous verses of his. Here are a few instances taken at random ;

1, In abiding by thy contract, of five parts to three,
there can be neither more nor less.
Wouldst thou bring under the plough thy fallow land,
for thy old lapses they will not take thee to task.
Gird up thy loins, take up the plough and do not wait
for the offer of thy neighbours' help.

1. yas din tas yin toray naadas
2. khwadaabaad kar mo praar kaadas
   vaadas zyaada na zi kam
3. rinda roz, boz zinday marun
4. sont chuy doh taara mo't yaavun
   nazi pazi saathaah raavu'raavun
5. candu'kuy raavi tas yas na diyi day
   draa'ly-das santsyath poshas na vay
6. chaav yith ciku'caav baanas neraan
7. tulu'katriv t'hor chu saathaah poshaan
8. kaal chuna valu'vaa'sh kaal chu na zaalay
9. pazi kathi patsh pazi saarinu'y
10. mwakhta palu'zyaa taa'ry-zyas na tram ta lo lo
11. tsaras ro'stuy tsoor chu na aasaan
12. sheeshas ta sooras mel chaa
    teel neri kanimanzu tel chaa

Instances could he multiplied almost from any of his poems, but I should refer to the dialogues between the Tree and the Shadow in the poem of that name, and to the longer poems, *Radhasvyamvara* and *Siva La'gu'n*, and to almost anywhere in *Sudaama Caritra*. These instances should not only set at rest all controversies about "Hindu Kashmiri" or "Muslim Kashmiri" as regards Paramanand's diction but also help us to understand that a poet's alchemy can impart to words of common speech the lustre of gold. I shall quote quite a few lines from *the Tree and the Shadow* which, very appropriately, Paramanand wrote in the masnavi couplet form.

kulis ta tshaayi os ye'tskaal nyaay
siry-yas nishi a'nzru'ni aayaay
tshaayi do'p syat'haah vaa'r[1] ko'rnam kuly

---

1. Zid

tshaayi roodum a'chin paa'vy-nam phuly
tamu'naa chum siry-yi vuchu'han gaah
draam nata neryam na suy shar zaah
vuchu'han baan'u'manzu' sanmwakh baan[2]
vaatas yaam saatas na rozaan
kuly do'pus myaa'nis saayas tal
bacikhay ta na ta traav bacinu'c kal
tsu' aasakh ta myaani manzu' aasnu' suu'ty
byo'n neerith tse' hivy labu'han kuu'ty
panu'nuy kaal chaa paanu' tshaaran
haavu'hay ta aasu'ham pata' laaran
myonuy aasun chu con aasun
myon praavun chu siry-yi praavun
lay gatsh me'y tal, bo'y sapu'nakh
moorakha, ma siry-yas nakhu'nakhu' pakh
kunikyaah rozakh na vwathu'yay tho'd
siry-yi vuchnukh swaad[3] tse' gatshee ho'd
paanu' yus na vuchvun rozi darshun
kani kyaah naphaa aakaashi varshun
paanu' aa'sith tsu' Paramaatmaa praav
gali yus paanu' tas gyaan kyaah draav
boozy boozy tshaayi samshay[4] rozan
kuliro'st saru'karu'haa bo zan
lanji aki siry-yi taany tshwanji d'eshan
kwanji galu'nu'ci aa's vut'h pheshan
zonum zi siry-yas vuchnu'c shaay[5]
kuli ro'stuy cham na andyos nyaay
paadan tal saaye siry-yas pyav
deen gav vanu'nu'c roozu's na zyav
Paramaananda, vantu' na'niraa'vith
t'ast'hyan t'aa't'hy gay seer baa'vith
siry-yi kyaah TATSAT swaroop zaanun
yus na paanu' aa'sith ti gav zaah no'n

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2. Siry-yi 3, aanand 4. shak 5. jaay

nyargwan nyaranzan ta nyaraakaar[6]
saariy ro'stuy ta sarvaakaar...
suy kyaah tshaay yas tshaarnas chay
mwakht[7] labihe siry yas de'shihe hay
suy chuy kul ta suy kul juzvi kul[8]
ye'my ka'd'y ranga ranga me'tsi manzu' gul
tas chas tshaayi-hu'ndy paa't'hy arpan
aash cham zi satprakaash vuchu'han
rooz ye'li kuli ke aasara tshaay
andyos nyaay me' ti andyom nyaay ..

V

The third group of his shorter poems consists of, what I have elsewhere called, *lila*-lyric. They are predominantly subjective wherein the poet sings as a lover devotee of Personal God, chiefly Radhakrishna. There is in all of them a note of abandon, of joy and gaiety, and in the best of them the quality of, what Jalal-ud-Din Rumi calls, "the inspired speech". Paramanand's poetry has pre-eminently the quality of ecstasy of those who "break through to the Oneness", the Ultimate Ground of all Existence, and to whom the multitudinous show of the world and life is phenomena by which the One Essence is made manifest. He is, like all true mystics, irrepressibly happy and divinely drunk.

This note of ecstasy was something new to Kashmiri poetry, (though not to Sanskrit mystics of Kashmir like Utpala), which till about the middle of the nineteenth century is characterized by little abandon of joy, sensuous or supernal, and little gaiety of tone. Not only the sacred but also the secular verse introduced by Haba Khatoon in the sixteenth century is largely plaintive and sad, expressing the pain and torture of a helpless masochistic lover, often a woman For Paramanand

---

6 nirguna, niranjan, niraakaar 7, mukti 8.soruy ti ta byo'n byo'ny ti (the Whole as well as the part).

the universe exists; it is real and it is good. All creation is a manifestation, an overflowing of God's joy, and, in terms of the allegory of *The tree and the Shadow*, the Shadow (the human soul) cannot see the Sun except through the Tree. He goes further and questions :

> paanu' aa'sith tsu' Paramaatmaa praav
> gali yus paanu' tas gyaan kyaah draav
> (Be yourself and realize the Supreme Atman.
> What use is knowledge if you cease to be ?)

For instance, the well-known *lila* song beginning—

> raasu'mand'las cath premuk mas
> saasu'bazu' matsu'gaa'matsu' natsu'nas...
>
> Drunk with the wine of love, the Gopa maids
> in thousands came to join the circle dance ;
> and hand in hand they clasped with shouts of joy :
> "Radha, Radha, Radhakrishnaji !"
>
> Confusion cleared and doubt removed from all
> that thither came all mad in ecstasy—
> among them Narad, Dhruv, Shukdev, Prahlaad—
> they shout for joy : "Radhakrishnaji !"
>
> Could we compare abode of Indra with
> the Bindraban of old, beyond our dreams ?
> Here, on the earth, that day all those who came
> knew freedom from the bondage of the flesh
> which comes as grace from Radhakrishnaji.
>
> The scales fell off their eyes. Even trees and plants
> and stones laid bare their inmost heart to love,
> and all attained to *mukti* in Gokul,
> by grace of Radha, Radhakrishnaji.
>
> In steadfast faith we realize the truth ·

our dance devotion is and knowledge true,
samadhi in our wakeful activity,
in company of Radhakrishnaji.

Where love is like in ocean limitless,
where sour and sweet are equally welcome,
and where we are beyond all trace of sin,
there do we dance with Radhakrishnaji.

Or, this short sweet song with its dancing metre, beginning:

aaras manz atsu'vay
vigine zan natsu'vay
laagos posh pooze
Krishnajoo ne'ndri vuze
vwapu'ras kas patsu'vay...
laa'jhas tani tanu'y
shehlekh hani hanu'y
kamav premav hatsu'vay...
vanas manz nanu'vaare
tshaaraan Krishnapyaare
kanyav taapav tatsu'vay...
paa'mpur shamu'has path
taran kyaah chuh karan gath
ma'tis path kar mats'vay
aaras manz atsu'vay...

Come, let us join the ring
and dance like fairies.

Let us with flowers worship Him
and waken up our Lord.
Except Him whom can we entrust
our body and our soul ?

The maidens ardently in love
locked him in close embrace,
and felt refreshed and cool.

They went forth barefoot to the woods
to meet their Lord and Love,
undeterred by the sun above
and hot stones underneath.

The moth around the candle-flame
goes wheeling by and burns itself ;
so dance they all, spell-bound and mad,
their sportive Love around.

Or,

aakaashi siry-yi-prakaash no'n draav
gaash aav vwany, Krishna, darshun haav...
gul pho ly baagan ta hee vanu'nu'y
dooru'phwali myaani, go'ynaa kanu'nu'y
lolu'suu'ty bolu'nas chi bulbul ta kaav...
vela vot amryata varshanu'kuy
Parmaanandu'ne varshanu'kuy
La'khymano lolu'ce daari vatshu'traav
(The sun has streaked the sky with light,
the morn is come. Show thyself, Lord.
In gardens rose and jasmine bloom,
the songbirds sing their songs of love,
My Love have you not heard of me ?
It is the time of blissful peace,
the time when nectar rains down the sky ;
this surely is the immortal hour,
the hour of God's immortal dower.
This is the time, O Lakshmana,[1]
to open the windows of your love:)

'Open the windows of love', says the poet ; and that sets the key for the *lila*-lyric ; but no translation can quite catch the dancing rhythm or music of the original. In music and a whole-hearted abandon and gaiety, the lila-lyrics of Parama-

1. Paramanand's disciple, Lakshman Raina Bulbul.

nand were surpassed by those of his successor, Krishna Razdan of Vanpoh ; but no one has surpassed him in combining these qualities with depth of meaning and passionate intensity. Here is in translation a lila-lyric characteristic of him at his best :

kaasi yamabayi con pre,yam ta lo lo

Thy love casts out all fear of death, and makes
us see the truth about our life, the round
of earthly incarnations, the illusive chain
that binds us to the wheel of time, the ever-
recurring cycle of our coming and going,
our birth and dying.

Thy love doth give one-pointedness and true
direction to our outward wills, desires, thoughts—
the restless curvettings and champings of our mind.
So may we break the untamed horse to the rein,
and ride it on to our goal.

Thy grace vouchsafes us the Vision Splendid,
when Truth becomes an overpowering knowledge,
integral to our being, a direct perception
that cannot be denied, and sets all doubt at rest.

The eight *Sidhis* are his for the asking,
but bent on seeing none other than Thee.
Thy devotee looks on them with an indifferent eye.
Knowing their worth, what cares he for them ?

He would not rest content with aught
but the Most High, the All-Perfect. So he attains
to the unitive life, and all his sense and mind
conflicts resolved, he goes to Peace,
that passeth all understanding.

He knows all : there's nought for him to know,

nor aught unknown to him ; nothing to hide,
nor aught to speak. No sour or sweet for him,
no pleasure nor pain. He hath attained to equipoise.

Wouldst thou this blissful state of being desire,
trust not thy mortal flesh as thine immortal dower.
It needs discipline hard, it must be told :
"Mortal thou art and thy portion is death".
Thou canst not at the target arrow shoot
until its tip of steel flashing forth
strikes it deep unerringly.

Know that thou canst not string the precious pearl until
each single bead is bored.

Slay thy petty self and cast away the fear
of death and mundane fears. Renounce all codes
prescribed, all ritual and rules of *Varnashrama*,
of caste and creed. Then know thyself : therein
thy profit lies. Realize in thought and word
and deed that thou art That.
Thou mayest read *the Vedas* and *Puranas* all :

but get at the truth of all that thou dost read,
and thine alloted tasks perform; yet cling not to thine ego;
say not, "Tis I do this, tis I do that".
So shall the Lord take up thy works and lead
thee swift and sure across the shoreless sea
of ignorance, dark and deep.

Words are not deeds; nor wilt thou live in God,
if thou recit'st the scripture texts by day and night.
Give up thine ego and attachments all ;
nor be content with the learned lore of holy books.
Realize the truth as part of thy being :
Mere meditation will not lead thee far.
Surrender thyself to Lord, and thine
ego renounce. There is no other way.

Once awaked, love cannot be confined within,
but must ooze out and fret to find itself
without, its correspondence in the love of man
and nature, which it shall everywhere find.
Then love within shall flow without,
and gushing and gurgling in a whirligig of joy,
the bubbling founts of love shall dance and play.
Exalted thus and united with the love of all,
what cares Thy devotee how the world regards
him or what it says ? He is indifferent
to all its praise and blame.

Having attained to the Supreme Bliss, O Paramanand,
disdain not to walk the lowly ways of life;
but act thy parts on the earthly stage,
and don whatever robes will suit the various parts
that thou must play, intent on spiritual good
not worldly gain; in non-possession rich,
and this thy means to sail across the sea
of shoals and storms. Rest not nor stay behind
e'en for a breathing spell Strive on to reach thy Goal.

VI

Paramanand's contribution to Kashmiri Poetry, however, consists not in his shorter poems but in his three longer poems, *Radha Svyamvara*, *Sudama Charitra* and *Siva Lagu'n*. Of these three *Radha Svyamvara* is the most musical, it has abandon and gaiety ; and containing about 30 songs, it it very nearly related in its tone and treatment to lila-lyrics. Indeed, it is a lyrical narrative ; the poet finds it difficult to suppress his own intense emotional reaction while describing the lila of Radha-Krishna and cannot but burst into song. Very few of the 30 songs are a part of the narrative like *aaras manz*, *Radha-Radha-Radha-Radhakrisnanji* or *gaiyaan kad'o Prabhu nyari a-re*. The argument that this poem is later than *Sudama-Charitra* is

unconvincing. The casual allusion to Sudama's reception by Krishna in lines quoted by Zinda Kaul viz.,

> boozith yi Radhaayi gara aa's nivaana
> Swadamas-zan Bhagavaano

is a very common simile and nothing more. The internal evidence of style, mood and treatment relates it to an earlier period, to a time of comparative buoyancy of youth. *Sudama Charitra* is more mature, more objective in its treatment; it has only two songs which, in their subject-matter, are intimately connected with the narrative; and what is more, it has restraint, the poet is master of his emotion; there is economy of language and the allegory is more organic; the poet feels less often the need of drawing out in his own comments or songs the spiritual truth of the allegory from the incidents of the narrative. But there is irrefutable internal evidence to show that *Siva Lagu'n* is a later composition for, says the poet in *Radha Svyamvar*, that he will relate how Siva cured Devi of her pride and how Sati voluntarily leaps into fire

> tee vani Paramaanand yee chu vanaana
> Shiv Deeveeyi kaasi abimaano
> kath ba'd' che' Sa'tee gath kyaah che' karaana

Siva Lagu'n is less musical than both these poems ; it experiments with a more difficult and unusual rhyme, but it is not quite fair to say that it "has only a language interest for the reader". On the contrary, I believe that it leads naturally to the fourth group of the poet's shorter poems in which the language is more skin to the language of this poem it is terse and elliptical, and the meaning weighs down the music.

Each of the three narrative poems, however, has the unity of a great mystical idea, the love of God for man and of man for God. The allegory in each of them controls the various incidents and gives them a structural unity. *Radha-svyamvara* tells us of Radha's choice of her spouse, Krishna.

Radha vanu'nu'c kaankhyaa me' aasaana
tee dwarlab kar me' aasaano
yathaavath yuth aasu'haa' vanaana

The poet sets himself the difficult aim of telling faithfully, "yathaavath", the story. He describes the early childhood of Radha, her pranks and gambols with other Gopis and her love for Krishna and Krishna's love for her, and the celebration of the marriage—all these are told with a sense of delight in the telling, and there are faithful pictures of rural households and communities The conclusion of the poem is, as the conclusion of a story, not as effective as that of the other two poems. Other incidents like that of Rukmani are brought in at the end which distract the mind somewhat from the main theme.

Sudam Caritra opens impressively with
gat'i-manzu' gaash aav caane zyanay
jai jai jai-jai Deevu'keenandanay

(From darkness came forth light when thou wast born,

Hail, hail, to thee, O Devaki's Joy, all hail !)

followed by a sonorous beadroll of names and attributes of Sri Krishna as the Avatar (already quoted) ; and moves on to describe the various significant events of his life, the episodes of, what may rightly be called, 'Krishnaavtaralila". Here are a first few stanzas of the poem rendered into English which may be entitled "The child Sri Krishna"

The child Sri Krishna

From darkness came out light when thou wast born,
hail, hail to thee, O Devaki's Joy, all hail !
Manifest in myriad forms by Law
Divine of Shakti's might, thou art the lord
of life that dwells in all that lives, the All-
Pervading and Eternal Spirit in

the Primal Matter and the soul of man.
Thou art Energy, Light, Perfect, Pure,
All-wise, Awake, Auspicious and the Good,
and All-containing Treasure thou-How can
men know the Undefined-By-Qualities,
the Formless and the Indescribable ?
Vasudeva's ever-smiling son thou wert ;
and though he witnessed many marvels yet
he did not understand thy god - like sport.
Born seemingly thou wert as child unique
to cowherd Nanda of Gokul. Beyond
attachments all, how could the Jamuna
waters touch thy feet albeit they rose
higher and higher when thou wert fording it ?
Transcending space and time —thou camest out
of thine abode in thine ownself out of
the reach of mind.

Yashoda showered flowers
on thee, and neighbours all, each one by turns,
did fondle thee in their own laps. They named
thee 'Krishna', the Dark one who to himself draws,
out of abundant love for thee. They made
thy cradle in the pupils of their eyes,
O stealer of butter and cream, O thiever of milk !
To greet her on the birth of son, they came,
the cowherd maids "May thou live long !" they said,
and all the neighbours, friends and maids rejoiced.

For thieving milk Yashoda scolded thee.
Not knowing thee, the lord of the worlds, "Open",
she said, "your mouth, you naughty child". And lo !
behold, she saw the universe inside.
Crawling about, the meek wise child went forth
to steal the milk ; from all sides noises came

and milkmaids all complained "He broke my pots,
and mine, and mine, and mine and mine," they cried.
And cried Yashoda too : "You cause me pain,
you humble me and make me feel ashamed,
voracious child, you ever-hungry child."
Scolded thus, you ran away and she
ran after you, a halter in her hand.
"I will," she thought, "now bind him with this rope".
He whom no painter can portray, whom *jnaan* and
dhyaan can never bind ; who can be bound
by him alone whose heart is pure and kind,
eluded being caught, though running round
a small compound Tired and out of breath,
she gave up the fruitless chase. The son was moved
as for his devotees is moved the Lord
and offered he himself for being caught.
She tied the halter round his waist, it proved
too short ; then halters to countless halters tied.
They proved too short for him whose neck adorned
is with *kustabha* garlands measureless
of universes infinite.

Who can

recount thy wondrous deeds ; who can indeed
describe the Spirit Immanent ?

The story of Sudama is told at length and takes about one and a half times more space than all other episodes together. This episode is remarkable in its form and execution From the very first line,

Swadaamjeev os yaar Bhagavaanas,

till about the very end—

Swadaam raaza bo'v panu'nis na'gras—

there is not a superfluous line, the verse moves unhindered

and even ; and we share the sorrow, hope and joy of Sudama without being weighted down with the allegory. The allegory is there no doubt but unobstrusively, and it enriches rather than takes from the interest of the story. The conflict in the mind of Sudama, his doubt, hesitation and shyness are all subtly revealed ; and the poem moves on to a crisis which is resolved in a denouement. The diction throughout is smooth and simple but sinewy.

Siva Lagu'n tells the story of the self-immolation of Sati, her re-birth as the daughter of King Himalaya and her marriage with Siva. As in *Akanandun*, there is a folk legend behind the poem ; and both Prakash Ram, the author of Kashmiri *Ramayana*, Paramanand's predecessor, and Krishna Razdan, his successor, have written long narrative poems on this theme There is a comic element in all these *Siva Lagan* poems in the descriptions of the priest go-between, and of the first appearance of Siva as the bridegroom ; but while it is a burlesque bordering on vulgarity in the other versions, Paramanand has treated the incidents with a gentle irony.

> yithu'tithu' paku' byaakh yoozanaa
> dyavu' meli dakhinaa ta boozanaa[1]

and

> tsha'r aash hyath su va'r bazu'nas
> lo'gmut pazu'nas ta lazu'nas
> pulu'hor puu'rith davu'—davah[2]

and, again,

> praarun pazihee kyoontskaal
> vuni chiy phat'u'nay gontshu'vaal
> bujiras yuth saang chuv kavah[3]

---

1. "let me walk a *yojana* farther. Perhaps I may somewhere get some money and a fine meal".
2. "Hoping against hope, the purohit is bustling about (as if all this were due to him), very busy with what is to be done and given away, running here and there in his grass shoes."
3. "You ought to wait sometime more," they said (to Siva, seeing him as the bridegroom), "the hair on your lips has not yet appeared. What do you mean by such foolery at your age ?" (No's 1, 2, & 3 translation by Zinda Kaul).

The poem has, besides, a few fine descriptive touches. For instance :

tati chuy sheeshu'khaana shishiras...
tambv'lyomut ta'thy-thu'y bahaar
rambu'vun su d'eeshith zambu'vaar
swat'hkhu' larinu'y tati mwakhtu'dyon...
(The frost has glazed the winter snows
and turned them into glass...
The glory of the glacial vastnesses,
of pearl foundations of the marble palaces,
are the envy of the Spring,)

I read a deeper nuance of allegory in the poem. Siva would not be known except through Parvati ; unless Shakti manifested Siva. He would remain unknown. This idea has been poetized in a popular but deeply significant devotional Sanskrit poem, *Pancastavi* :

अक्षात संभवमज्ञातकुलितान्वायम
भिक्षुं कपालिनमवाससमद्वितीयम् ।
पूर्वं करगृहणमगंलतो भवत्याः
शम्भुं क एव बुबुधे गिरिराजकन्ये ।

(Siva—

Of parentage and ancestory unknown ;
without a family and race or caste ;
Unborn, his birth and breed and blood unknown ;
A naked wandering mendicant ;
A human skull his only ornament :
Alone, without a second He—
who would know him, O Parvati ;
Before you granted him the favour of
Giving your hand in marriage unto him ?)

VII

Paramanand's contribution to Kashmiri poetry can be fully estimated only if we understand his use of symbol and allegory in his poems, notably in the three longer poems. A mystic has to speak in symbol and allegory, for he cannot speak of his experiences nor intrepret them without images if, in the words of Paramanand, he has to convey his meaning to others so that they may understand and, what is more, recognise the truth of it and believe.

panu'nee kath vanu'nee
parzanan parzu'nu'nee
shrapu'vu'ny ta vyapu'vu'nee

In his shorter poems Paramanand does not choose his symbols arbitrarily to represent the other meaning nor does he use objects which tradition has already invested with a symbolic meaning, as *saaki* and *jaam*, rose and cross, or lotus and serpent On the contrary, he took common things, objects of daily use in farming and familiar events of a farmer's life, and made of them a natural symbol, giving them a significance which, by their very nature, so to say, they could bear ; and so we find that discrimination becomes a ploughshare ; field of action, a farm ; spiritual *sadhana*, ploughing the farm : and well-known stages of the pilgrimage stand for stages in yoga. "This is the skill, and doubtless the Holy Scripture intends thus much," says George Herbert, "when it condescends to the naming of a plough, a hatchet, a bushel, leaven, boys piping and dancing ; showing that the things of ordinary use are not only to serve in the way of drudgery, but to be washed and cleaned, and serve for lights even of Heavenly Truths".

In his longer poems, generally speaking, the narrative is the thing ; it moves on from episode to episode, filling in descriptive touches and scattering a wealth of phrase and ima-

gery ; and then suddenly there is a little word, often a metaphor, even a pun, sometimes a verse of comment, and the cosmic significance comes with the force of revelation. This is almost everywhere in these poems and I need only refer, as an instance, to the episode where, in *Radha Svyamvara*, the poet describes the stealing of Gopis' clothes at the Jamuna Ghat by the child Krishna and to get them back they have to stand naked before him. For, to come to the Lord, says the poet, one has to renounce all honour and egoism and sense of shame, and to be free from doubt and fear. Every spiritual aspirant knows that he has to stand naked before his God.

> haath joorith aasu' vwathu'dani rozaana
> taathkaal traavi maan·abimaano
> baath kyaa zi rovmut aasinu' labaana...
>
> nyathu'naniran khani kari timu' paa'ny-paana
> nanyar timan ya'ts vwalu'saano
> anyar tsali ye'li paan aasi haavaana

Or, in *Siva Lagan*, the holy men who come to Sati to dissuade her from marrying Siva and, having tested her constancy, say what seems to be the usual thing to say on this occasion : We grant that you desire Him and He too desires you and we know that this mutual love of yours is not anything new but a very old urge between you two. Though you are away from each other, in your heart of hearts you are very near". But it illumines a great mystic truth ; for, say they, "will you not concede that distance lends freshness to the meadow greenery?" Even the God-realized saint, in whatever condition ("*Jeevitam mritamathaanyathastu-me*", in Utpaladeva's words), has to keep his longing for God alive.

> yatshu'nas tsu' tas ta tas ti caa'ny veer
> a'zici na zi che' praani-praa'ny zeer
> doori roozith neeri-nyoor chiva

In *Sudama Charitra* the poet narrates how the Gopa women came running after the child Krishna complaining, "He breaks my milk-pots, and mine, and mine", said they ; and his mother Yashoda, feeling mortified at these complaints, runs after him with a cow's halter in her hand to bind him with. The child eluded her every time, and even in the confined limits of a compound, she could not get at him ; and when she was tired and gave up the chase, the son was moved to pity ("as God is towards his devotees"), and he surrendered himself to be caught. The parenthetic analogy by the poet at once illumines the episode with a mystic meaning : God steals the milk of *bhakti* for his hunger is insatiable ; Buddhi tries to bind and delimit God but learning cannot help her even to form an image of Him, and, even though He is within her own heart, she cannot catch Him But before a devotee God surrenders Himself. All this the poet does not say but there it is in a flash in that parenthetic hint.

maa'j ye'li tha'c aar aav santaanas
(yuth bhaktan hund yivaan Bhagavaanas)
rat'nas paan'y pannu' dith rood tanay

Sometimes it is a single word that invests a whole passage with supernatural significance as when he says : *Sudamajiva* (which can pass for Kashmiri term of polite address, *joo*) was the friend of the Lord in his 'angel infancy' ; they were inseperable and there was no difference between them :

Swadaamjeev os yaar Bhagavaanas
baalabaav kvaah ta lwaku'caar Bhagavaanas
kunuy paanu'vu'ny dwan na zi byanay

or, in a very melodious and ecstatic verse in *Radnasvyamvara*—

vra'ts myaani goopiyi ts'y patu' laaraana

bansaree naadu' vaadu' mataano
nas'hrith hyas ta hosh ma'shrith par ta paana

Every movement of my mind,
a Gopi running after Thee,
drawn, like mad, by the call
of the magic flute,
oblivious of sense-objects,
distinctions mine and thine—

where the poet says that the call of flute is provoking (*vaad*), and the human soul cannot disregard it. He knows the value of the human soul, for God is as much a lover of man as man is of God. Sudama had not yet come to the Palace at Dwarika but Krishna had already made preparations to receive him : We expect Sudama today, and shouldn't that make us proud and happy ?" he was saying to Rukmani.

vuni os vaatu'nay Dvaarikaayi mandu'ro
sakhrith roodmut Shyaamayswandu'ro
Krishnajoo Rukmani karu'van sa'tsuy
az yiyi Swadaam chakhnu' thyakanay

"For," says the poet, ' shall we not say that the Lord Himself has drawn Sudama to Dwarika?"

nat niv zora tor Bhagavaanan'y

And, how can faith fill a devotee's heart unless the Giver of all boons vouchsafes it ?

yiyi kati Bhaktis mani manz baav
diyinay daata yas mangu'ne draav
vuchi say yas dapi a'ch mutsuraav

while the allegory does, to an extent, smother his shorter poems *yaatraa* and *Karmaboomikaa*, it is a marvel that Paramanand has succeeded in saving his longer poems, the story as well as the poetry of them, from the stifling effect of allegory.

VIII

This brings us to the last group of his shorter poems, the

fruits of his life-long Sadhana, which "read like the meditations of a Jivanmukta". In them he has left far behind him the prescribed ritual and even the Sadhanas ; and his experiences are told with the conviction of *Siddhantas* or self-existent truths, in a language which, under the stress of thought, becomes aphoristis, not always easy to intrepret.

1. khaa'rith praan tay caa'rith ragu'nu'y
   shama dama nashimaa yi vaav vavzon

2. apu'zu'y-mapv'zu'y che' pa'zu'y maanu'ny
   agnyan ta tygnuyan maa na'ny gaye

3. t'ot'h tas vyan kenh na zaanun gavzi t'thyos day manas
   anapeekhut praavu'naavyam poornu'aanandu'may manas

4. yiy chukh ta tiy chukh na be'yan vuchonuye
   a'chinhund gaash paanu' achiv vuchoonaye
   vuchun chu conuy vuchivun gatshi vuchonuye

Of the style of this group of poems, and their rare mystic insight, following stanzas may be taken as a good example :

gindunaah chu zindu'marun
    sahaz vyatsaar karun
    sahazas praav patshe
    sham ta dam naav gatshe
    paanu'rost paan swarun

---

1. "This tempest of distress cannot be allayed by *shama* or *dama* or by the raising of the breath-energy to the head and straining the vessels and nerves". (Z. K.)
2. Though unreal, Maya has to be taken as real ; neither the wise nor the ignorant have known her in essence.
3. God's grace means nothing else but that man holds nothing dear but God. Desirelessness alone can fill mind with bliss.
4. Thou art what thou art, not seen by others ; that which makes the eyes see is not seen by the eyes. All seeing is futile unless thou seest the Seer.

veedav chu vo'nmutuy
vidyan vani o'nmutuy
vyadinishi tsyon'nmutuy
Shakht vo'nhas to Shivay
zaav kas ta aavu'gavay
ne'shdyan shrshravay
Sat-tsyath-annandu'maye
vaa'tith mwayi mwaye
praa'vith yas na mwaye...
navdaari mandore
tswapaa'ry man dore
layi tath trwapaa're
tsyath swaru'nuy tsyadaakaash
siry-yi tali chuy swaprakaash
ast vwaday chus na tyath naash
premu'saru' va'huvu'ne
reh he'yi hani hane
pony lagi teelu'kane
vaara ye'li vuchzi mandar
roozy-zi na ta'thy andar
andu'vand Shaamu'swandar
vatshu' traa'vith ta daare
yor zaani tor laare
tas vyan kyaazi laare
sahaz vyatsaar karun

Here is an attempt at translation which may give some idea of what the poem is like, its quality of vision and inspired speech.

To seek unity with God is to venture forth
and hazard all, to experience death in life
and be re-born into the higher self within.
Not by control of mind and senses but
renouncing self and ever intent, thou wilt
come to the selfless Self by faith devout.

Known by the Knowers blest, *the Vedas* speak
of Him beyond the prescribed paths, He shines
an all that is as doth the glorious sun,
undying and unborn. As Sakti known
to some, to some as Shiva, He is the Ground,
of all, as Being-Bliss-and Consciousness,
and yet aloof, untouched by everything...
In the nine-windowed mansion of the body
the mind wanders free and turns its gaze
outward, now looking through this sense-window
now that, diverted by the multitudinous glory
of life without. Close these outlets fast
and shut it in, and turn its gaze inwards,
commune with the self within, the subtle
all-compassing *chit* which inhabits all that is,
and in which all things live and move. There shines
the self-effulgent Sun, in unborrowed light,
who rises not nor sets, eternal and undimmed.
Then love will blow to every corner of the self,
kindling a devouring fire in every fibre
of thy being ; and, like oil feeding fire,
feed the flames of love wherever it glows.
The more it burns, the brighter glows the flame,
and burns all selfhoods till nought is left but He.
This inmost Sanctum seen, shut not thyself
within, for God is everywhere without.
Throw open all sense-gates and let the mind go where
it will. It cannot go where God is not.

IX

I have already given illustrations enough to show that Paramanand's rhythm for didactic and narrative poems is as close to the rhythm, and even the syntax, of the living speech

as it could be ; that he draws his unaffected diction and homely metaphors and similes from the common speech of the day and his symbols from the familiar occupations of the rural community around him ; and that his symbols are not personified abstractions or vague allegorical figures of vices and virtues but concrete objects and figures from the epics whom thousand of years have made familiar to us and who, so to say, are a part of the race consciousness of the Hindus. He can vary his metre and, more often, the rhyme-schemes ; though the usual stanza is a 4-line stanza, he has given us terse couplets also. There is in his poems a wealth of poetic devices, not a superimposed ornament but an element of the very fibre in his verse : there is an abundance of alliteration and assonance ; and rhymes, end-rhymes, medial rhymes and even initial rhymes, come to him naturally and unbidden. There is a little too much of pun though sometimes it is used for the allegorical side by side with its ostensible meaning. His poems at their best have the qualities of ecstasy and vision ; and, when this is so, his speech is inspired, it flows with spontaneity and bears the stamp of conviction and self-experience. All this entitles Paramanand to the praise given to him by Zinda Kaul : "he (Paramanand) easily surpasses all his known predecessors in the technique of metre and rhyme, and all excepting Lalla in mysticism".

Humour in Kashmiri

The Afghans conquered Kashmir in 1752, and the conditions which had been bad enough became much worse. Centuries-old loss of freedom and consequent oppression and tyranny together with the visitations of flood, famine and cholera, and also internal factions and feuds which recurred with periodical regularity, had borne heavily upon the people and weighed down their spirits and imagination. From about the middle of the eighteenth century and far into the nineteenth, the Kashmiris were, by and large, a sad people ; and, apart from the *raas-lila* lyric which came to be written later in the nineteenth century, it is rarely that we find joy or gaiety of spirits, not to speak of humour, in Kashmiri literature. Two things, however, seem to have brought some mirth and cheerfulness into the gloom of the countryside. First, there were the fairs and festivals associated with the local shrines, the *ziarats* and the *tirths* (and they are all over the Valley). Secondly, there was *band'ajashn*, a sort of open air village folk-theatre managed by companies of professional players or minstrels. Clever at improvisation, these *baands* or *bhagats* invariably introduced typical character of a Kashmiri peasant, *groos*, impressed into forced labour, *begaar*, who by his verbal fencing and evasive replies, *d'aamb*, evoked laughter and who, appreciating the incongruity of his own situation, could laugh with the audience at himself. They would not spare the *Lambardar*, the head man of the village, nor the village *patwari*, who maintained the village revenue record ; and placing them in embarrassing and awkward situations in the presence of their superior officials, had a hearty laugh at them. With their wonted humour

and satiric mimicry, they enacted comic scenes in which were exposed the social and bureaucratic excesses of the time.

There were, moreover, the folktales which, as in *Heemaal*, had an ill-tempered shrew, chohra Batany, as a character set off against her never-do-well husband Sadaaraam, mortally afraid of his wife. In them we find the usual folklore motifs and the usual forms of fables, ghost stories, stories of wit and cleverness, and merry tales of the fableau type, sometime coarse and scatological and full of cuckoldry. There are the mischievous villain, the shrew. the witty and wily man, and the clever rascal ; and some of the stock characters have an element of farcical humour about them. It has been noted that as a field of folklore literature, Kashmir is not surpassed in fertility ; but while the folktales show wit and wisdom, cleverness and irony of situation, there is little of humour in them. The wit and wisdom as well as the sense of the ironical of the Kashmiri are evident from his proverbs and sayings some of which have a streak of humour in them.

1. phrastaa, thadyok kyaazi
   do'pnakh panu'nee syazru'
2. a'ny su'nz kwalay khwadaayas havaala
3. pitu'ry hasdu' kori khatanhaal
4. Khanabala khe'yi voontan kapas
   Varamuli tsa'tikh doonis nas
5. aakh ay ta o'nuth kyaah
   yimu'ye ta khyaavakh kyaah

. It is difficult to retain the streak of humour in translation. It is, however, attempted here. 1. O Poplar, why are you so tall? Because I am so simple and straight, 2. A blind man's wife is in God's keeping. 3. To celebrate a daughter's circumcision for the envy of one's collaterals. 4. The camel ate someone's cotton somewhere. Somewhere else, far away, was a carder's nose cut. 5. What presents will you bring when you come ? And, when I come to you, what will you offer me ?

6. akh baanu', be'yi paanu', be'yi talu'baanu',
   be'yi koridilu' gaanu'

7. Ali Kaaniny dandu'hawar,
   akh na atsaan gara
   byaakh na neraan bara

It was about the middle of the 19th century that, for the first time, Kashmiri produced a poet, famous as the auther of the love romance *Gulrez*, who had the eye to observe, though not with a large-hearted charity, the foibles and ludicrous incongruities of behaviour of a Kashmiri farmer. Maqbul Shah belonged to the class of *peers*, the Muslim religions guides, and he found it hard to conceal his spite or withhold his sarcasm which mar the humour of his *Greestnaama* He does, however, attempt a blending of his satiric attitude with humour when, for instance, he contrasts the welcome with which the farmer receives the *sazovul*, the village official, with the apathy which he shows for the *peer* whose visit sends him and his wife into hiding in the cattle pen : ' nyabar aa'sity atsan gaanas andar taam". Or, when he describes how ingeniously he can wheedle money out of you ; or, again, when he tells the amusing anecdote, "asun laayakh ku'saak akh". about how stingy the farmer can be.

1. panun matlab ye'mis nishi zaani neryam
   dapyas kaa'lee kwale me' ti aab pheryam

2. patay a'ny doombu'hu'nz aa'dij kwaku'raah
   kajaay tami vaaru'kaarah pooty daah baah
   timan saanyav gwanahav la'j patay gaant'h
   shutuly-buji aayi te'li vath pyaayi ye'li haant'h

---

6. First they take the pots and pans, then they make you work for them, then they demand money to meet their expense, and then they hurl abuse at you (said of officials on a visit to a village). 7. One-eyed Ali's pair of bullocks—one will not enter the pen, the other will not move out of it.

The farmer's wife does not approach the *peer*, for she (a lady ! has to go about properly veiled :

> mureedbaayaa na bronh-kun kaanh ti aaye
> bihith zan aasu' sa'tras raaji-baaye

And the mosque-it has not been opened for the last six months and the bugs and vermin are become thirsty for human blood :

> mutsurmut os na tath shyan re'tan bar
> bwachemu'ty suu'ty aa'sy tati maankan ta tsar

Maqbul shah wrote Malanaama Peernaama also, satirising the unlettered *peers*, whose qualification for their job is their *mulla* turban :

> a'd'ee alhamdu' pa'ry pa'ry chakh gatshaan zeer
> chi neraan phent'i ga'nd'y ga'nd'y a'sy bnyaay peer

A longer illustration may be given here in translation from his *Greestnaama*.

The Farmer and the Priest

> Seeing him come, the farmer and his wife
> come out to meet the village functionary.
> "Please," they plead, "dismount, come in and rest
> awhile and let us press your feet and show
> our deep regard for you. Only last night
> we said you had not been this side for quite
> sometime. Need you be told that we regard
> our children as our hostages to you".
> But when they see the village priest approach,
> the man and wife run to the cattle pen
> and hide themselves and tell their children
> to see, as if they see not, if he comes
> or goes away. Should he come in, they say
> to him : "Father is gone in search of grain ;
> for fuel mother to the forest went.
> For six long days we had no food to eat.

and father prayed to God for you to come
to beg of you to part with some old clothes
to cover his nakedness, protect himself
from cold." This told, the priest, bereft of hope
sorry feels for having come so far
and lest he should importuned be and lose
his shawl or gown, he thinks it wise to go
away. Lucky he thinks he would be if
he does not meet the farmer on his way.

Maqbul Shah's *Greestnaama* and *Peernaama* started the vogue of writing comic-satiric masnavis and, indeed, provoked a rejoinder from Mirza Mir of Beroo village whose *Mwaqadam-naama* is, however, more of an apology in defence of the farmer and, from a literary point of view, mere invective. Nothing of importance in this genre is produced till about the last decades of the century unless mention be deservedly made of the comic element in the Mohini episode of Parmanand's *Radha-suyamvara*, attributed to Lakshman Raina, his disciple. Sri Krishna goes to meet Radha, disguised as a woman bangle-seller and teasingly talks ill of her fiance, that is, himself This is an amusing interlude in the poem. There is also the comic characterisation of the priest go-between in his *Siva Lagan* and, later, also in Krishna Razdan's *Shiva Parinaya*. The poor priest tired but not finding a likely match for Sati Parvati must walk farther in the hope that he gets to somewhere where he may have a handsome money gift and a hearty meal.

yithu'tilhu' paku' byaakh yoozaaanh
dyavu' meli dakhinaah ta boozanaah

But, seeing the Great Ascetic in a lion's skin, he trembled with fear and fell supine on his back, licking his lips and biting his tongue.

tharathara tsaayas pyav patthar
patharan pyat'h traa'vith su thar
pheshaan vut'h ta tsaapaan zyavah

This is amusing as is also the dialogue between the Ascetic and the Brahmin, the Ascetic entreating the Brahmin to plead for him and the Brahmin ridiculing him for his advanced age and uncouth appearance Thereupon the Ascetic beats the Brahmin into acceptance of his request, evidently out of fear.

bangi duu's osus bronh kane
lo'g dagu'ni brahmanas hani hane...
maa'nim caa'ny kath taali pyat'h
vavu'khwata kyaah khasi shodu'tyat'h

Earlier Waliullah Motoo had satirized the Bad Wife in his *Heemaal* and later Lakshman Raina described the ridiculous appearance of Makokaal in *Saamnaama* ; but one is sarcasm, the other a lampoon.

It was in the last decade of the century that Sir Aurel Stein collected some folktales of Kashmir in his *Hatim's Tales* in which we have a humorous poem entitled *Yarkand anon zenaan*. It is a devastating comic-satiric poem in which we, in Kashmir, set about preparing for the conquest of Yarkand in Sinkiang, impressing into service potters and cobbler-scavengers and, what is more, even women with child or in childbed, collecting horses from villages where no animals bigger than fowl were to be found and equipped them with cruppers on their heads and reins on their tails and with strong grass pack-saddles on their backs.

gury mangu'naa'vikh kwakargaaman
kalu'kiny dumij chas lat'ikiny laakam
goasu'gand' ta zacizeen puu'rith soormaan
yaarkand anon zenaan
vaatu'ly do'p vaatu'ji ba' nay saru'na zaah
chim mangaan daalu', moy, ta kaah, dapan
Yaarkand anon zenaan.

About the later part of the century Abdul Ahad Nazim of Ve'jibror wrote a few fine humorous poems which have

come down to us only in a few stanzas as, for example, of the poem he wrote on Abdul Qudus, known in the town as Quda Caci (*caci* in Kashmiri is Hindustani *cacaa*, uncle). His son was married to a daughter of the Kwakar (literally, cocks) family ; and making a pun on the surname, Nazim wrote

taftaani baa'qirkhaani
tee booz khwadaa zaani
ga'nzryakh ta lazakh maci
Quda Caci mubaarakh

bronthu' draayi Kwakarbaayi
aji mast aji praayi
aji zechi aji tshwaci
Quda Caci mubaarakh

Kwakrav kyaah ka'r kaa'm
shan shan traa'vukh traa'm
athi aayi zu' zu' me'ci
Quda Caci mubaarakh

(Crisp, tasty biscuits, cakes,
we hear (God knows the truth !)
from bakeries were bought ;
then counted, each by each,
were stored in earthen vats.
Hurrah for Quda Cacaa !

The wedding party was received
by Cock-family hens,
some tall, some dwarf,
some in the family way
Hurrah for Quda Cacaa !
They laid the dinner plates
each one for six, not three,
and every guest returned
with only half a meal.
Hurrah for Quda Cacaa !

Nazim also wrote a parody, the first of its kind known to us, on a well-known mystical poem of Mahmud Gami beginning

> "tamseeli aadam pritshaam hubaabas
> rinda chukh zindu' kitha aabas suu'ty"

He wrote—

> "malas ta baabas ru'sh che' suu'ty aabas
> yitsh chay kaa'fras Kaabas suu'ty
> patsh nay yivitay gari pru'tsh baabas
> rinda chukh zindu' kitha aabas suu'ty
> (*mullas* and *baabaas* hate to touch water
> as Kafirs hate the holy K'aba.
> Make sure, go home and ask your father
> how he hates to bathe in water.)

Some years later we find Mohi-ud-din, better known as Mahda Deek, writing humorous quatrains wherein the humour lies chiefly in an unexpected juxtaposition of Kashmiri with Persian.

بادہ چوں قلقل سراید ساز چوں کیں کیں کند
سوز عشق اندر سرم چوں مانچھ گن بیں بیں کند
چوں کرم نشتیم بریں ھاکہ گبس پیتھہ - یااسب گرسنہ
کہ کند صبر زبس پیتھہ
رم خورہ ز چندہ بنستیم یبس پیتھہ- مامیک و بد خویش
فکندیم ربس پیتھہ
حقاکہ بود پرورش طفل ببس پیتھہ

In (1) above we have the Kashmiri words *kuu'n kuu'n*, *maanchgan*, *buu'n buu'n* and in (2) the words *haaku'gabas pyat'h*, *zabaspyat'h*, *yabaspyat'h*, *rabaspyat'h* and *babaspyat'h*. But Mahda Deek, noted for his retorts and repartees, had a proclivity for the indecent, even scatological, verse which offend against good taste. Such is, more or less, the case with

Mulla Habibullah Hakeem, a younger contemporary of his. He wrote several ghazals on the model of Mahdi e. g.,

ثناها همه ایزد پاک را خداوند هندو و پلهاک را

wherein he sung the praise of "Lord God of mushrooms and wild vegetation". Or, in

دیری سفر مرگ چو خوش بود جیبا- محتاج نگشتیم
دریں راه تنس کن

He also wrote amusing poems like *Paagal Sakinaama*, and, better still, *Sahlaabnaama* which describes the comic side of the great flood of 1903 and which is the first attempt at a humorous poem unalloyed by any indignation or satire. It begins with

> swakhu'mwakhi va'sith aav aabi kuhaar
> gav kunuy Khanabala Khaadanyaar
> (All on a sudden the floods rushed out.
> From Khanabal to Khaadanyaar
> Water, water everywhere.

and goes on describing the funny flurry of the people affected by the flood.

For quite sometime past the socio-economic conditions of the time, accentuated by the apathy and inefficiency of a corrupt bureaucracy, appeared to have stirred not only the pity and anger of the poets but also their sense of the comic-satiric. For, the Kashmiri, finding himself powerless to remedy or to mitigate his ills, learnt to laugh at his sorrows, his humour being his only armour against fate. A certain class of talented poets, known as *lad'ishah*, began writing comic-satiric ballads describing the discomfiture of people under the stress of natural calamities and also the funny adjustments necessitated by the strange new conditions. Here are a few instances :

1. buji aki do'p yi kyaah didy gom
   kasaabay osum su ko't didy gom
   su habee nyoonay guru'aaban
   zor ko'r ve'shive sa'hlaaban

2. bo'd' Maagam o'd' alu'rovun
   pyat'h Maagam kaad' kad'u'novun
   draav Pattanas tshat'u' maaranay
   aav bunyul ta gav yakhsaanay

3. pat'hwaa'ry do'p pat'hwaa'ry-baayi
   yi tse' khabar aa'su'y tinay vwany kenh
   tsoor nay bani vwany athu'va'tran
   Londonapyat'ha t'heka ko'r Lawraa'nan

4. havaa'yee-jahaaza aav mulki Kashmir
   yimav vuch timav ko'r toba takseer

1. Said an old granny in a wild flurry,
   "Oh, woe is me ! Oh, woe is me !
   O where is my headgear ?"
   "O granny dear, O granny dear,
   the yellow flood has carried it off,
   the Vishav has overflowed her banks."

2. The earthquake went flaunting by
   and rollicking,
   and towns and villages joined the spree.
   Their legs they moved, their limbs they stretched,
   to their foundations reeling in
   their dance and glee.

3. "What you were used to cannot now be,"
   to his own dear wife said the patwaaree ;
   "we cannot tamper with the revenue record
   for Lawrence from London has so decred."

4. The æroplane flew into Kashmir
   and those who saw said, "Toba takseer !"

There are *ladishah* poems on salt scarcity and cloth scarcity, on flood, fire and famine. and on any current topic or event of popular interest. There may be such poems on, say, "the modern educated son",who sends his father out on chores and tells his mother not to look on when "She" his wife is tired but to go and strain the gruel. The *ladishah* poems give dramatic snippets and concrete humorous situations in telling colloquial idiom ; there is nothing vague and amorphous about them nor do they use the learned stale diction of our masnavis e. g.,

> koons chu na zit'hy-su'nz kath bozaan
> go'bur chuy maa'lis kaami sozaan
> huhay tha'c vaaraah ded'y batu' phyaar
> lo'b kun dwanu'vu'y pyo'v daanas
> siru'-kath ka'rhay paa'ny paanas
> akh khyamav myoot'h zyoot'h pali karav dyaar
> hash chas neraan zaaru'paaras
> may tsal kath rozi samsaaras
> garu'baar conuy doh paa'nshi praar

In the recent period of our literature which began from 1925, we find some influences trickling from the neighbouring states, mainly through the itinerant Parsi Theatrical Co. and Alfred Theatrical Co. of those days, which performed Aga Hashar Kashmiri's Urdu plays. Kashmiri authors began to translate some of the plays and introduced in them comic scenes after the dramas of Aga Hashar. The late Nandalal Kaul did this successfully in several of his plays, notably in *Satu'c kahwa't'* (The Touchstone of Truth), called *Raja Harishchandra* in Hindustani, in which he introduced not only comic songs but also the clownish actor Nakshatra. Ghulam Nabi Dilsoz of Na't'ypor wrote a few humorous skits about this time. The most notable contribution was, however, made by Lakshman Razdan of village Haanad Tsavalgom of Kwalu'gom Tehsil. His poems *Daaku'vol* (The Postman),

Mirahaa'my Saal (The Feast at Mirahom(, *Ve'shvi Khaandar* (The Wedding of the Vishav Stream), *Gaad'adyagul* (The Pot of Cooked Fish), *Totagudrin Caay* (Tea at Totaram's at Gudar), and, above all, his *Laala La'khyman* became very popular. The last poem recounts the misadventures of his own and his friend Laala and, like *Ve'shvi khaandar*, is almost wholly free of indelicate comment or epithet. Though his poems, in varying degrees, raise a snigger or a chuckle rather than a laugh, yet it remains true that his poems have genuine humour. It is said that at the suggestion of a well-known *sadhu*, he tried his hand at writing a *lila* song or a *stotra* (hymn) in praise of a god but could succeed only in portraying the ridiculous about him and gave up the attempt. I shall here give the whole poem, *Lala-La'khyman*, in original with translation into English.

barnipyat'h baa'shdoh be'yi bat'avaare
Laala La'khyman shakhdaare draay
praalabu' gayi grahatsaaras milu'van
satu'ranji palu'vaah gilavan draay
vatu'gata kani chukh bo'hgunaah baare
laaraan tha thaaraan titshi peshkaare
dayigath vati vati logun rood
t'api t'api volun daare daare
gaamu'neerith tha'vikh manzbaag d'alu'su'y
zalu'su'y pha't'y kalu'su'y taam
talu'kho't d'wad' gaz pyat'hu' vo'th paahre
gwad'u'nee seraah hyo't a'kis graakas
martsu'vaangun chu na haakas kyut
zaag'uni roody mwaku'damu'—su'nzi vaare
batu'nu'y hwaknu'raa'vy tuu'ri la'gy dazu'ne
Laalajoo zabituly kad'u'ne lo'g
tha'r—kiny pyav va'sith var lo'gus kaare
subu'su'y Laalajoo pho't' a'kis gamu'nas
paa'ntsh mo'hnivy tas lamu'nas la'gy
shaamas mwaku'lyaav karni la'gy taahre

dohu' akis tatikis vaa'nis Raamas
Bhaagvath vo'nmas shaamas taam
batu'myo'nd' dyavu'—diyi yee vyatsaare
shaamas vo'n—nam talu'vaas o'ntham
batu'myand'i baapath vo'ntham gyaan
a'sy kati maanoy yim zaanskaare
bud'u' bat'u'nyaah akh pemu'ts ta gaa'mu'ts
marnu'daadi aa's dwadu'remu'ts
coku'manzu' kro'tsh hyath aayam laare
nigraa'nyaah akh naa—yinsaanaah
gat'u'kaaras bat'u'gaanaah rood
ho'cmu'ts khaaru't' tas savaare
batu'khyani pheraan saanyan d'eran
mant'is khyath os pheshaan thaal
va'ny—tav seru'manzu' asi kyaah laare
caayi daa'ny dwadu'paav paan man taaray
d'akunu'tay baat'i hyath praaraan beet'hy
gury-zan treshi va'thy Jehlmi-hu'nzi naahre
Balu'kun nyacuvaah athu'khwar va'hrith
satu'ranji kaa't'hyaah caa'rith aav
sath man d'uu'saah pa'tykiny baare
mushtu'lo'g haavu'ni doore doore
kaangu'ri tsoore laa'jin haatsh
a'sy tsa'ly asi do'p begwanaah maare
bo'hgun hyath aay pheerith aagas
bo'hgun phutrus braandas pyat'h
ta'my ko'r na jigar ajikhaniji haare
Laala La'khyman shakdaare draay

Laala Lakshmans' Exploits

It was the twelfth day of the dark fortnight,
the moon was in the Taurus and it was
a Saturday to boot, when Laala and
Lakshman, on this ill-omened day, set forth

to take up job of *shakhdaaree*, a job
to supervise the leased lands and grain
collection at a village far from home.
In spirits high we hurried forth but God
willed otherwise, for *pitter, patter. pitter*—
it rained throughout the day, a downpour sharp.
A tattered durree and a cooking pot
was all we had to serve us all the time.
Housed in a hut in disrepair, beyond
the village, built upon lowland, we found
ourselves in water three feet deep below
and thatched roof leaking from above. For ration
we, from a farmer, got a *seer* of rice;
but to spice *haakh* we wanted pepper which
was not on sale and therefore had to steal
from *Lambardaar*'s[1] kaleyard. Poor Laala went
in search of food, shivering in the cold,
and gathered tender sprouts from fields but slipped
and sprained his back. Next morning he again
did slide into a swamp wherefrom it took
five men to pull him out by dusk ; and we
gave thanks to God. One day I entertained,
from morn to dusk, the village grocer with
the stories of the *Bhagavat Purana*,
thinking he would be moved to give us food.
But when I ended, he, the clever rogue,
evaded me. "You have been talking all the day,"
he said, "of spiritual and moral things,
inveigling me to give you food ; but I
too clever am for you. You may now go,
thank you." We tried the hospitality
of another house but there an ugly hag,
so wasted and worn out that we believed
her death was near—her anger made her bold

1. Village headman.

and out she came at once from kitchen door,
and flourshing her iron *krotsh*[2], she did
drive us away. As ill luck would have it,
we were not left to do our job
but old Inspector came, a cruel man,
riding a shrivelled hack, demanding food
as bribe, though what we cooked was not enough.
Nor could we offer many other things
to keep him pleased. How could a *seer* of rice
feed all the three of us ? A pinch of tea,
a *paav* of milk and water, gallons three—
this made our tea which we gulped gurgling down
our throats as horses water drink to slake
their thirst To cut the story short, one day,
wielding a heavy mace, suggesting fight,
the son of BaalakRam, the village tough,
accused us of the theft of his *kaangree.*[3]
He threatened us and called us names and waved
his fists. Then instantly we ran away
and stopped not till we reached the employer's home.
And at his threshold broke the pot, and yelled:
"Here goes the cooking pot and here we go!"

There were a few others like Wahab Sadhco of Sopore, but nothing much of their verse is known, and they are said to have used invective. Not so Munawar Shah of Band'apor, who wrote a poem, *Gilgit begaa'ry*, which is still known an which is free from indelicacy.

In two of his ghazals the late Abdul Ahad Azad shows his impatience with the worn-out ghazal theme of love. For himself, he pleads his helplessness in the matter of courtship for want of time and leisure owing to the humdrum preoccupa-

2. an iron shovel for stirring the fire and drawing out charcoals from the earthen oven 3 a movable fire-pot which is used by Kashmiris in winter to keep themselves warm.

tions of his domestic life. They are, by intent and in execution, frankly humorous.

madanvaaro lagay paa'ree
bo no zara 'ashku'—bemaa'ree
tse'—suu'ty gatshi fu'rsathaah aasu'ny
dilas gatshi farhathaa aa'su'ny
me' gaa'mu'ts naa'ly naadaa'ree
tse' chuy khaaluk ta zulfuk gam
me' chum maa'su'm ayaaluk gam
bo miskeen chukh tsu' darbaa'ree
pagaah chum ha'dyi dyun peeras
thavyam kan toba—takseeras
qayama'ts doh karyam yaa'ree
ho'nd'is kari hoon hoonis ho'nd'
ka'nd'is kari posh poshas ko'nd'
karun chum raa'z pat'hvaa'ree
yiyam ye'li raakhu' "forester"
dimakh nay kenh anan "Ranger"
gatshyam virizyun ti sarkaa'ree
jadas yus aala mat'i osum
vunustaam suy nakhaspyat'h chum
bo kyaah haavay dilaavaa'ree
bo no zara 'ashku'—bemaa'ree

Or

ye'mbu'rzal tse'y patay marahaa
bo kus thaavan gare Bo'mbroo...

Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor also wrote a few ghazals of this type, *Laa'o, laalo, haa guli laalo, vwalo haa poshinoolo poshilanji pyat'h taaza "lecture" kar,* and, notably, the ghazal on Freedom, beginning

sanaa saa'ree parav saanyan
garan manz tsaayi aazaa'dee...

where newly—won freedom is compared variously to a brooding hen hatching eggs of profit and pleasure for the select few; to a newly-wed bride pre-occupied with feasts and festivities in the houses of the rulers and the rich; and even to a concubine who gives birth to an unwanted child and, consequently, to inconvenient problems.

Most of the writers immediately after 1947-48 Pakistan-sponsored raid, were earnest about changing the world; and tney took themselves seriously. Few of them had the detachment or the maturity to see that the world would go jogging on its own way not withstanding our brave challenges and flagwavings. There were, however, some exceptions. In Deepak Kaul's story, *Raadikaaku'ny braa'r*, too much inquisitiveness land Raadikaak's wife into a ludicrous predicament from where she can be extricated only when people are told that it is not she but only a *cat*. Akhtar Mohi-ud-din's story, *Dand Wazun*, blends the serious and the comic in a satisfying success. The first scenes of Som Nath Zutshi's play, *Mo'dur Mas* introduce two women guests who are heard making subtle, sharp but humorous remarks about their hostess. And, perhaps, the comic muse at its subtlest best (though not unmixed with irony) in Kashmiri short story is to be seen in Amin Kamil's *Honi Rahman* and *Kwakar Jang*, particularly in the latter, in which the foibles and eccentricities of character of the two women neighbours, Jaana Bits and Shah Maal, are expressed through their respective cocks.

In "Niza Saa'b' and "Mr. Machaama', made popular as radio features, Pushkar Bhan utilizes both humour and wit in his comic characterisation. Niza Saib is a scion of an aristrocratic country-side family which has migrated to the city where the incongruities of adjustment often make him cut a ridiculous figure Mr. Machaama is a young man in his twenties and belongs to a family which has recently promoted itself from the lower classes to the middle class and which has,

therefore, the ambition to see their young hopeful succeed in life. In his efforts to succeed, the young man makes of himself a thoroughly laughable character as, for instance, when he acts at his home as a hero of a cinema picture ; or when he tries to be modern and, *a la* cinema, makes love to a girl and gets thrashod for his pains ; or when he pretends to be a non-Kashmiri and raises a laugh trying to talk other people's tongue. Though sometimes the situations created are burlesque and the fun hilarious, we find here a sustained plot and amusing incongruities of speech and action which provoke spontaneous laughter. Below is given a scene from Pushkar Bhan's *Hero Machaama* :

Machaama : (To himself) Machaama, chin up. (Searching for his pocket mirror) I .....did I not keep it in one of my pockets ? Here is the comb. (Singing) Ah, yes, here it is (looking in it) What is there in a film hero I don't have ? I should do as well. (He looks to the left wing of the stage and finds his wife there.

Shee......Shee...Shee.

Khatij : So you have come.

M : Where's Kaakh ?

Kh : In the other room discussing you.

M : Where's Kaakh Dyad. I say, where's mother, mother ?

Kh : In the kitchen.

M : Come closer, come. (Seating her on a chair, he goes a few steps away and sings) Now, by God, do I not look an actor ? Khatji, I am now an actor Like this (straightening her drooping shoulders). You are sitting here and I .....(going backwards a few steps) and I am acting, coming in singing. Don't look at me this way. No, like this. Keep your neck high. Just a little higher. Yes, that'll do (Singing again).

M Kh : (Raising her neck). I feel tired this way.

M : O Khatji dear, why do you feel tired ? I love you dearly, O so very dearly. But I must teach your father a

lesson which he will never forget. To-day or tomorrow or some day, I will.

Kh : O my God. What has he done to you ?

M : (Irritated) *Takhseer, takhsecr* ! Can't you see, I am only acting, Why can't you understand ?

Kh : Alas ! what has happened to you ? What shall I do ?

M : Allow me to rehearse my part. You will soon see all our woes ended. We'll be rich, very rich—a car, a bungalow, servants. Khatji, money and yet more money. Then you will see whom you have married.

Kh : (Feeling pleased) Can that be true ? Really ?

M : You won't believe me, I know. But give me this one chance and pray for my success. They tell me, in a day or so the news will be in all the local newspapers. Then you will know. Now, let me rehearse. I know what father will say though. (mimicking) "My ! What's the matter with you my son ? Why waste your time thus ? Why, O why, can't you apply yourself to your own job ?" And mother will expostulate (mimicking again) "Sonnie dear, what's up today ? Why don't you understand how your father feels ?" But why worry ? One has to bear these taunts and admonitions. (growing sentimental) That moment will soon be here. The bands will go about the street (imitating the playing of the bands). The announcer proclaiming : "This evening's show. A rage, friends, a rage of the season. First show 1-30 P. M. Second show 4-30 P. M. Third show 9-30 P. M. Come one, come all. See the famous hero Machaama in the show. A gate crashing show. Don't miss it, friends. Come one, come all." Then will father and mother and relatives all open their windows and watch. My likeness on the posters. You don't believe me, do you ? (Imitating the approach of the bands).

Kh : Alas ! alas ! what is the matter with him ?

M : Acting, acting. What else ? Nature has endowed me with this great gift. Your eyes—they are a musk-melon your

tressy hair—the young sprouts from the vegetable roots. Your ears—they are pink tomotoes. And your brows, long curved beans. Khatji, tell your father, plainly and directly, that you will marry me. Yes, and only me.

Kh : But surely I am married to you. Why do you say all this ?

M : Hold your tongue. How stupid ! Can't you see ? I am acting. Your part is to approach me, crying (imitating a woman's voice) "I will shun the world for you, O my love". Then you have to sing a song :

"The stars will die
And the moon will die,
But not our love.
I am, my Love,
Eternally yours."

This is acting. Do you see ? Then you will cry again.

Kh : But way should I cry ?

M : For me. Who else ?

Kh : (crying Alas ! he's sick !

M : What a wife has fallen to my lot !

(Enter Kaakh) Why, what new drama is this ? What new mimicry ?

M : (Singing) "Kaakaa, what will be, will be
Dedee, what will be, will be..."

K : What has come over you this evening ?

M : You see for yourself. "What will be, will be,
What will be, will be.. "

KD : May I be offered as a sacrifice for you, my son ! (To her husband) He has taken ill. Don't you see. He is off his head.

K : Yes, that's so.

M : "O God. What will be, will be......will be"

(from outside voices are heard : *Machaama, Machaama...*)

In their short plays Akhtar Mohi-ud-din (*ga'b ta mut'hyle'j*)

ufi Ghulam Muhammad (*bechikat'h*), Ali Mohd Lone (*Taa'zbat'un kaan*) and others have introduced laughable characters like Petsidaar, Bechikat'h, Saa'dmakaar, Pe'njitsaat'h, Ba'lybeg, Batu'saazandar ; but they are all stock characters, types not individuals. Among poems mention may be made of Imamdin Makhmoor's *Gil draayi astaan* (Gil goes to the Shrine) which has a touch of humour e.g.,

ba' dapaan zaatas kartam yaa'ree
su dapaan pa'tyking lo'gsay paa'ree

(In front I pray "O God, befriend Thou me !"
Behind he sits and whispers, "I love thee.")

Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, " Khizar Maghribi, " appears, by his temperament, to be a poet who looks at things in a humorous way : and he writes poems which are humorous not only in their theme and intent but in which even the metre and rhymes which he employes are a source of laughter. He impresses into service exotic tunes from Punjabi, Pahari (language of the hill areas) and even from the cinema. The unusually harsh winter some years ago, Maghribi observes, came as a blessing to the butchers, for frost added the weight of frozen ice to the meat they sold which, however, screamed aloud on frying pan. as never before, the injustice of it all. He notices the funny spectacle of the motor-lorry scratching the ice as helplessly as a hen scratches the hard earth ; the diesel bus sneezes from cold and the rich man's motor car lies helpless and. to its chagrin, is laughed at by the upstart peoples jeep which goes whizzing by.

sad'kipyat'h ye'li laaree phasaan
kwakraah hish chay sheen tachaan
pwandu' chy laayaan deezu'l bus
kaar chay dapaan chas bakas

jeep chay traavaan asan khangaaraah he
yuhus tul vandan ye'ti gat'u'kaaraah he

After all that I have said, I remain unconvinced however. "Humour', is an English word, and it should mean what we understand by it in English. Judged by that test, I should say that, while the Kashmiri is justly noted for his ready wit, retort and repartee, pun and play upon words which come naturally to his tongue, and subtle sarcasm or downright satire, Kashmiri literature is deficient in humour, which is good natured, reflects no anger, and leaves no sting.

Zinda Kaul

What distinguishes the poetry of Zinda Kaul from the long line of Kashmiri mystical poetry is its modern note ; and what distinguishes it from the large body of modern verse is its mysticism. His poetry stands between two worlds of poetic imagination : the one that has little hold on the present, the other that borrows little from the past. The "bare, sheer, penetrating" power of poetry which transports us to a state of serene blessedness where, from the disturbance of doubt set free, we are made to share an experience which is itself the proof of its own truth—this ability to communicate a moment of vision is the mark of excellence in mystical poetry And to impress on us the conviction of a mystical certitude which dissolves doubt, albeit forcefully expressed, not by the rhetoric of any dialectic of philosophy but by the ardour of thought and felicity of expression—this too is a rare achievement. Zinda Kaul comes near achieving this high success in at least two of his poems, of the first kind in *Naatayaa're* (unpreparedness) ; of the second, in *Vadihe Manush* (Man Would Weep)

Zinda Kaul was born on the 5th of Sawan 1941 (17th July 1884) in a poor family, where poverty meant chill penury. He passed his childhood in circumstances which benumb talent ; and when he grew up to manhood, he had his share of tragic sorrow, the death of his elder son at a young age, which however, he bore with remarkable fortitude as, later, he bore his old age and sickness with uncomplaining serenity. He had to take up a job for a living at an early age ; but as teacher in the Hindu Middle School, Srinagar, and, later, in the Government High Schools, he soon won enduring respect and love of

his young pupils. Thus he came to be affectionately known as "Masterji" and continued to be so known even after his services where transferred first to the Government Research and Archaeology Department and, later, to the (then) Publicity Branch of the Chief Secretariat.

Zinda Kaul was a quiet, soft-spoken man. His ways were gentle, almost feminine No one saw him angry or heard a harsh word fall from his lips, nor even heard him laugh a loud laugh. He would not join an argument to win his point. A man of few words, he was never vehement, never positive; nor would he show his affection, however, deeply or disturbingly felt. It is doubtful if, even as a child, he had played with other children on the wayside or participated in manly physical sports and games. His wants were few and his habits frugal Contrary to the custom of the community of Kashmiri Pandits among whom he was born, he abstained from taking meat, and his food was simple even by the standards of his time. He was a light smoker, and the only luxury he allowed himself was tea and, occasionally, music but he would not go out of his way to hear it. He had a quiet meditative cast of mind. Before him, in his later days, one felt to be in the presence of a meek, saintly person. He was prepared to meet his end which came to him at Jammu on the 3rd of February, 1965. Such is, he had said in his poem, *Haay Samsaar*, the destined end of all created things and, in the round of seasons, the winter of death must follow the autumn of old age

> "yee chu zagtuk ti and, she'hlun ta nirvaan,
> kramu'kiny pazi shamu'nuk maag vaatun"

Zinda Kaul was largely self-taught. He was not widely read but he read wisely and well; and there are few men who have profitted as much as he from what little he had read. He knew Urdu and Persian as few of his contemporaries knew; he could write competent English verse as can be seen from his translation of *Sangrahastotra* of Utpaldeva's Sanskrt *Stotravali*;

and he surprised his friends when, at an advanced age, he turned his hand to writing Hindi verse. Even at an early age he showed his precocious talent when, in the company of several Persian scholars, he, quietly sitting in a corner of the room, accepted the challenge and, there and then, produced the well-known Kashmiri verse in the "fivesome" style of Poet Qaani's Persian *Qasaayid*, to the astonishment of all present :

sa'rm su laala-rukh manas
jalaav lo'g kazalvan"s
pho'rum su naar khirmanas
lo'gus na dam ti zet'hunas
dilas hyo'tun, jigar tatyav, ta shor vo'th zi naar haa !
(The moment I thought of Love, a tulip flaming red,
a fire was kindled in my breast, an uncontrollable forest fire.
Quickly it spread, enveloping my harvest gathered in ;
the heart caught fire, and liver too.
The cry arose : Fire Ho ! Fire !)

It is a pity that in spite of this casual but impressive experience, Zinda Kaul should have taken too long to realise that his poetic talent could find proper expression and make a mark only in his own mother tongue. And so it came about that for long years, almost till 1942, he wrote only occasional verse, mostly in Urdu and sometimes in Persian and Hindi. Fortunately, however, the realisation did come, though only when he was past his prime. Then he lamented that we, Kashmiris, had lost our tongue ("kath panu'ny asi raa'vmu'ts") ; that we were struck dumb like golden orioles and larks in an alien winter ("hardn'-ko'stoory, tuu'ri poshinool"); and that we were asked to play others' tunes on our indigenous instruments :

"kyaah vanav tay kyaah gyavav a'sy shakli aadam be-zabaa'ny
saaz yoruk raag toru'c booly paa'rim maa che' saa'ny"

At long last, says he in his poem *panu'ny kath* (Our own Language), we had found our lost tongue and deserved to be congratulated :

> "Kaa'shryan chaayak chu, daayak pyokh, ru'ts vath la'bu'kh
>
> raa'vmuts aa'su'kh panu'ny kath, kaa'ly ka'hytaamat la'bukh"

It was equally a matter for congratulation for him, for he also had found his tongue in which, more than in any other tongue in which he had written, he would leave a durable and significant body of verse.

Meanwhile, however, he wrote in these other tongues. His Hindi poems, entitled *Patra Pushpa*, were published in a small volume in December 1940 which he, with his wonted humility, introduced as "autumn leaves", the "private thoughts of an old man clothed in the words of a beginner in Hindi" but which are significant for indicating his view of life, work and death as for instance, in the poem *Patjad men Cinaar kaa pataa* (The Chinar Leaf in Autumn). His Urdu and Persian verses were compiled and edited posthumously by Professor A. N. Raina in January 1966. in a volume of 116 pages entitled *Divan-e-Saabit*. "Saabit" being Zinda Kaul's pen-name for his Urdu and Persian verse. Some of his Urdu ghazals are fairly successful, and *aa mere raahnumaa, bol o banaspati* and *klerkee*, in a lighter vein, with its refrain *oho ho klerkee, ahaa haa klerkee*, became popular in their day.

All Zinda Kaul's Kashmiri verse was written from 1942 to 1950. It was published in two parts : the first, 13 poems in all, in May 1951 ; the second, poems 14 to 31, "more serious, more personal," as he called them, in August 1951. He had, he says "kept back half a dozen poems as not of general interest." This indtcates that the total number of Kashmiri poems he had written up to date was only 37. These two parts

were printed in Davanagari script more or less adapted to Kashmiri. In the definitive 1955 edition of his collected Kashmiri verse, entitled *Sumran* and printed in the Perso-Arabic script, again only inadequately adapted to Kashmiri, he left out two poems of part 1, *Guru Bhakti* and *yee chaasaa' jaan*, and changed the titles of a few poems and a few words here and there This editicn, published by the Lalla Rookh Publications Srinagar, with a prose rendering by the author into English, contained only 35 poems.

It is by *Sumran* that Zinda Kaul's Kashmiri poetry will be judged ; and it is this slender volume of 35 poems that won him the Sahitya Akademi Award for 1956. It is in some of its ghazals and other poems that doubt, such as troubles the modern man, finds forceful expression. In the telling couplets of *A'zyuk Gaatajaar*, he gives us, in a light satiric vein, the characteristics of the wisdom of today. Knowledge which was a prophet to the ancients is today a sorcerer and a Frankenstein's monster. We have wrested her secrets from nature and enslaved the elements : knowledge has brought us wealth and power, ambition and daring; and, what is more, it has freed us from the fear of God. The universe is a limitless ocean of atoms in which movement and struggle are life and stillness and calm death. Life consists in clash and competition, and therefore is nature red in tooth and claw; and those cannot or will not kill must themselves go under and die. The big fish feed on the small fry ; and while wolf is safe at large, the lamb is daily driven to the shambles. The devout of ancient days saw God in Heaven. but the learned men of today protest that God is "but the figment of man's imagination, a projection of his own shadow." In a ghazal (no. 26) he is almost mockingly cynical :

> Christ promises heaven to the hungry pious.
> "A fine place indeed it must be," they think ;
> "but does it really exist ?" they ask.

In *Murshidas Savaal,* he questions his preceptor and lays bare his personal anguish. He would says he perhaps endure without complaint his own sorrow and pain ; but is it fair to make him a helpless victim of the pain and suffering of the innocent. This is evidently a reference to his widowed daughter-in-law which also finds a poignant expression in a moving ghazal beginning.

> yaaru'sunde daadi do'dmut dil bahaaras kyaah kare
> vaav yo'dvay sontkaaluk aasi naaras kyaah kare*

He finds that this is so everywhere with his fellow-men, this suffering, this agony of pleasure and pain. How then can it be affirmed that God is in His Heaven and the world is created by a beneficent God ? Is it fair, he askes again in another ghazal, to bind us to the fetters of an all-compulsive circumstance and yet hold us to blame for what we perforce must do ?

> laacaar aa'sy tee ko'r yi karu'naa'vikh
> son kartoot kavi buthi chaavaa'nee

Such questioning in regard to the problem of evil and suffering was unknown to Kasdmiri poetry ; and Zinda Kaul uncovers a new depth, a new dimension, not known before. Till his day poetry had, by and large, been a mellifluous expression of the common joys and sorrows of man and questions such as these had been passed by as of no moment. Even the mystic poets had only revealed their insights and experiences of a world where these questions had no relevance. Zinda Kaul, however, does not leave it at that. True, the Reality does not reveal itself to us ; the veil is lifted but seldom if ever and the light lasts only a lightning flash. True, also, that those who see into the heart of things cannot speak out and those who speak have not really seen. But there is the self-certifying testimony of our own heart, *dilu'c gavaa'hee,* which we may not deny as we may not deny suffering and evil.

* For translation see page 144.

lukh dapaan "tas dil chaa yaar bozee
graav caa'ny vaavas manj raavaa'nee"
dil dapaan chum luku'kathi kan thaa'vith
myon aasun chukh ma'shraavaa'nee"

others complain :

"Has He a human heart ?
Why waste one's breath like wind ?

But there is the assurance of his own heart which protests :

"Why heed what others say ?
Can you forget that I exist ?"

And there is the certitude. albeil obliquely affirmed, which surmounts doubt in the admirable poem, *Vadihe Manush* which. in a diction not divorced from the present-day idiom, employing new rhyme-schemes and rhythm patterns, rich in incantation and imagery, bodies forth the eternal *why* and *lol*-longing of the human soul.

chaa lol yaaraftaa'riyaa ?
chaa husn jaadoogaa'riyaa ?
(Is love an idle fancy ?
Is beauty a vain illusive show ?)

The dominant note of Zinda Kaul's poetry is mystical. He does not write religious or sacred poetry as such, and there are no hymns, *stotras* or *lila* songs Even in what may be taken as devotional poems, that is, poems in which he speaks of his longing for God, he has given a new direction, away from the prevailing style and theme of *lila* lyrics and *geet* of the time as, for instance, in *Raaza* (The King), *Sumran* (Token of Love or the Rosary), *Joogy* (The Yogi), *Sont* (The Spring), *Aarizoo* (The Wish), and *Sa'ny-yaa'sy* (The Sannyasi)- though all of these poems except *Joogy* and *Aarizoo* are written in popular folk-song (*chakri*) metres. All of them and a few more are charged with a faith unshakeably rooted in the testimony

of his own heart and with a spiritual aspirant's yearning after God. God is the Ideal, Truth-Goodness-Beauty, *po'z rut swandar*, that supports and pervades all that is ; that draws the moth to the candle-flame ; that is the root of the tree from which grow out the different branches of the various religions. The ignorant standard-bearers of the different religions boast that they alone know the truth though they miss the root and truth of the tree for the tiny branches and move further away from the Ground of Being (*Rubaiyat*). God's manifestation is God's own sport, *lila*, His peacock dance. He has endowed his Maya with her great illusive power and yet wrestles with it Himself. Beyond all form and colour, He could not be known and recognized but through this very illusive power and multitudinous show of things. The one without a second and beyond time and space, has put on limitation and become pairs of opposites, for the one could not otherwise be known or have any meaning for us.

t'haanu'ro'stuy baana palu'zyaa
baanu'ro'stuy t'haana kyaah
kun, ba'nith yim jor aamut
yor aamut gindu'ne—(*Raaza*)

short-sighted as we are, even we can find God's infinite mercy if we view His works as a whole, the round of seasons, for instance, and the cycle of the seed and the tree

yehsaan kulis pyat'h chi a'nee a'sy ti vuchaan
pan posh haran chu kul tavay do'r rozaan
byaa'lis chu rachaan kul tha'vith byaa'lis manz
juzvan chu yithay paa't'hy kulis pyat'h yehsaan
Rubaiyaat

And there is God's wonderful handiwork to see which is verily to worship God :

dayigath vuchinee che' dayisunz pooz—*Sont*

There are, besides, God's love tokens and messages :

tas chaa ka'mee nishaanan
    ba'ry ba'ry khazaana ve'siye
d'olan ko'han vanan manz
    sholan chi gulshanan manz
zotan chi taarkan manz
    kaa'tyaah nishaana ve'siye—*Sumran*

(God's treasuries are full;
There is no dearth of His tokens:
In forests thick, on mountains high,
In flush and bloom of gardens gay,
In scintillating starry skies—
They lie scattered lavishly.)

Every now and then God sends messages of love in various colourful forms:

khat patr sozaan chum yo't kaalu'vaa'sh
kaagzan hund rang byo'n byo'n beshumaar
poshimargaah, bo'd'saraah, taarakh nabaah
na'diyaa yath Ahrabal hivy aabshaar
poshinoolaah, paa'mpuraah, ye'mbu'rzalaah
khindu'karvu'ny harnu'jooryah sheerkhaar
maa'rmo'ndaah, swandu'raah, bo'd'gaat'ulaah
po'z fakiraah nafsu'twargas shaahsavaar

(My lover from eternity sends me
His messages of love in countless forms
and colours divine: a flowery meadow
a narcissus or a golden oriole,
a starlit sky, a butterfly, a pair
of frisky fawns, a woman or a man
with beauty blest, a truly wise fakir,
a master-rider of passions' fiery steed.)

God can be recognised by His *vibhutis*, His glories, that are everywhere about us These signs and tokens should be enough; but, if they are not, if they an idealist's dream, he

would clinch the issue. God cannot be seen or realized by mind, intellect or learning He admits that

> again and again does science say,
> "what you see is a mere day-dream."

But he heeds not what science says It is, says he, better to dream the kingly dream the dream that makes of us poets and painters and sculptors, Majnoons and Farhaads, that kindles a moth with passion for the candle-flame.

> a'lyman do'pum khaabaah vuchuth
> a'lymuk me' kenh parvaa na ko'r
> khaabu'y chu ye'ts behtar me' vo'n
> ye'my paadshaah mastaana ko'r
> shaa'yir mussavir but-taraash
> a'my khaabu'nu'y kyaah kyaah na ko'r
> kohkan ta Majnoon a'my banaa'vy
> a'my shama tay parvaana ko'r —(*Ghazal* 25)

Nor can he sulk and turn away for love will not let him go :

> roshihav ta maay thaph chana traavaa'nee"

But still the question persists; and he asks his preceptor, "What is the key that unlocks the door to the happiness and peace such as yours that is unruffled, that seems to have resolved all conflict between mind and heart, intellect and love, and solved the problem of evil and suffering ?"

I have dwelt at some length on the theme that engages Zinda Kaul's mind to emphasize that such cerebration was something new for Kashmiri poetry and not to suggest that the theme and content of poetry can be divorced from its form or pattern The pressure of thought creates the form or pattern; and it is in those very poems in which the content and form are welded harmoniously that he is pre-eminently successful. It must also be said that Zinda Kaul's conception of God is not

merely academic, an intellectual exercise or a philosophical dialectic. It is a warm-hearted conception of love. He knows says he, no other God; and, significantly, his book of poems, *Sumran*, opens with a hymn to Love (*Lolas kun*)

> I know no God other than Thee, O Love,
> I have known thy marvellous power divine.
> For Thee mine eyes gather Thy honied essence
> from creation's colours and forms.
> For Thee mine ears fill cups on cups
> with the vintage of sound and song.

Love is the light that shatters the dark mirror of multitudinous appearance and, penetrating the veil of duality, brings us face to face with the Unity behind. And, though man's heart is a mere bubble yet it has room enough for a storm of divine unrest.

> lolu'so'druk akh hubaabaah os dil
> band ta'thy manz dardu'toofaanaah ko'run
>
> (*Khaaka toodas*...)

Zinda Kaul is at his best when, in oblique but richly suggestive symbolism and imagery, he expresses an aspirant's longing and God's response to it. In *Vanan Manz Laal* (Gems in Deserts), the love-sick heart is mysteriously carried to the Garden of Love where it has a priceless vision of

> a mystic afflatus passing from heart to heart,
> where fleshly eyes of man intervene not
> between two lovers. The love-sick heart hath heard
> of God, but here it sees none other than man,
> in very truth, the Formless incarnate. Here
> it sees the self-same sap coursing through all,
> the meanest thorn yearning to be free,
> to feel the largeness of the whole, and to
> become the Garden itself. Here it realized
> how priceless is the heart of man, and lo!

God is love's luminous flame within
the heart ; for God chose His abode in love
when man was made, and love his dwelling found
where grief was great, in the heart of the sorrowing man.

The relationship between God and man is indeed a relationship of love. God is the Hound of Heaven ; He is our lover from eternity, ever on our heels pursuing us, and will not let us turn away from Him. In the eponymous poem, deservedly popular, God is our lover of long ago and gives each one of us a love-token in memory of our plighted troth which, in our waywardness, we may throw away but the loss of which we cannot make an excuse for not going to meet Him.

vyasrith d'a'lith pather pyath
  buth kyaah dimav ta'mis nish
path pherunuk pakan chaa
  yuth hyoo bahaana ve'siye
maanav zi a'sy hyamav po't
  choryaa tasund muhabath
paivand aadu'nuk chaa
  shur dosu'taana ve'siye

("After many slips and falls and goings astray,
how can we face our God ?" you say.
But these pretexts will not avail
  to turn away from Him.
For we may turn away from Him,
  but will He let us go ?)

This is, more subtly and impressively, the theme also of that very fine poem, *Naatayaa're* (unpreparedness). God is man's lover from eternity. He pursues him and seeks him out, but He is long-suffering and waits and waits. Finding man unprepared, He would rather wait than take him unawares and unprepared to meet Him and put him to shame. Meanwhile He sends man message after message of love to draw him

towards Himself and expects him, here on the earth, to prepare for His coming by untiringly looking out for Him and unstintedly giving of his love and service to his fellow-men. One night, says the poet—

> It was the last watch of the night, the wan
> Late-rising moon with her pale light suffused
> The sky, and flowers their fragrance breathed into
> The air. The hum of space and murmur of
> The stream merged in the silence of the night,
> And subtler music made. The oriole sang
> And, faint and far away, the starling spoke,
> And pollen-laden breeze gentle stirred.
> A sense of mystery pulsated all
> Around and expectation filled the air.
> "Had my eternal lover come ?" I asked.
>
> Had my beloved uninvited come ?
> How would he feel to find me unprepared ?
> I have no room to seat him in. What should
> Have been a shrine into a store-room I
> Had turned and filled with worthless household junk
> And dusty pots and pans, with worldly cares
> My mind so crowded that no room was left
> for love. With loving-kindness I had not
> My neighbours served nor shared my joys with them.
> The flowers of my garden that should have
> Been given away had been allowed to fade
> And I could not a garland make ; nor had
> I *puja* accessories to worship him.
> Feeling ashamed, humiliated and
> Exposed, I wished that I could hide or die
> so that he would not see me in this plight.
>
> It was not he. Would he put me to shame ?
> No, he would rather wait than me expose.
> My lover from eternity will wait.

Zinda Kaul is eminently successful in several other poems like *Sa'ny yaa'sy* (The Sannyasi) with its tone of abandon and apt varying epithets in the fourth line of the stanzas ; in the strikingly true-to-nature descriptions in *Sont* (The Spring) and above all, in *Joogy* (The Yogi) which, in deft irregular rhyming stanzas, gives us a poignant picture of an aspirant who has awakened to the inner life.

Kashmiri had its stock descriptive diction : the narcissus waiting with her cups of wine, the tulip baring its breast and showing its dark spot within, the stately larkspur, stately as the beloved's back, the shy violet, and a few others. Zinda Kaul had an eye for fresh details and discovered new beauties : the white turbans of the pear-tree blossom, the sapphire blue of the skies, the hum of space merging in the silence of the night, the pollen-laden breeze, the refreshing greenerv of the spring willows, the mercurial meandering brooks wriggling like snakes, the powerful hill-torrent springing like a tiger over rocks and boulders, the waterfall fretting and fuming with the spray. These and more are there in *Sont*, *Naatayaa'ree*, No'v varih (The New Year), and even in poems like *Haay Samsaar* (Oh, this World !) or *Vanan Manz Laal*. For instance ;

1. shaayi shaaye az chi sontas po'tru'zaay
2. zirnu'zaci honz bigryaav raad sheery sheery
3. pav rovmut, khoor phut'mut, ta buthi vaav,
   ko'th draamut ta mo't'hmut taaru'vun naav,
   yeeru'vu'ni naavi ceeru'vu'ny da'liye lo
4. O'bru'tshaaye zan gayi d'a'liye haay
5. laala zazrith taaza gomut laala-daag
   sangi asvad khastu'-devaaras andar
6. narm gaa'mu'ts ye'ts vazemu'ts garm taar
   saaz gomut soz setaaras andar

Sometimes, however, infrequently no doubt, he used ungainly expressions like *jiva boondan* for "the jivas who are

like water drops" ; *paapa durgan* for "the fens of sin" ; *dwakhu vartuk* for "the problem of suffering", *baamas pyat'h zan ta poorna tsa'ndrama* for "as if the full moon on the roof", and

"tas *duzangmas* kalpu'kulice lanji pyat'h ol aasihe",

where, by the italicized word, he means both a "twice born" biped and a bird. All these are not only unfamiliar but awkward neologisms. There are, likewise, a few far-fetched conceits like the following :

a) beet'hy baadaam posh baadaaman andar

b) bhaashan mo'dur mo'dur kar phutraav shakras mwal

c) za'meenas zanmu'kis va'vymu'ty
ashiky durdaana kenh ba'vymu'ty
a'chin manz chim ra'chith tha'vymu'ty
timay khraave jaray lo lo

d) va'hraa'ts vuzmali nishtaray
mutsraa'vmu'ts zan o'bru'rag
a'ch kalpu'kulice lolare dramnas
divaan ashi suu'ty sag

e) akh ratshaa qonoonu'kis o'bras vatshar
aasyaasanaa

In these and some other verses he loads his verses with more symbolic meaning than they can carry which he tries to explain in his English rendering but which under this heavy weight can only limp along. For this reason, he did well to omit the poem *Guru Bhakti* It is not, however, that he uses Sanskrit and Hindi words that "overburden" the verses, as is made out in the introduction to the Lalla Rookh edition of *Sumran*. It is not words, as such, that make expressions ungainly or "heavy" but the use of them in particular unsuited contexts Indeed, most of the Sanskrit and Hindi words he uses are in-

evitable words in the context. But it will not do to say: the almond blossoms rested (were reflected) in the almond shaped eyes of the spectators (*a* above); "talk sweetly and bring down the price of sugar" (*b* above); "in the plot of land, my life on the earth, I have sown tears and reaped pearls of tears which I have preserved in my eyes and with which I will adorn thy sandals (*c* above); "as the lancet of the lightning flash of the rainy season opens the vein of a cloud so at the thought of Kalpataru, he waters the sward under his feet with his tears (*d* above); or "may there be a little opening in the clouds of the law (*e* above). The quotations are from the poet's own English rendering.

Then, again, the lines in his poem *Raaza*,

> "bo'd' Jawahar yor amut
> yor aamut gindu'ne"

which he translates: "God has of His own will accepted limitation by space, so has our Gem (Jawaharlal) of his own choice accepted imprisonment and arrest"—these lines are either facetious or foolish, that is, ill considered, whatever they mean. His poem, *Sheenaah volun*, (The Snowfall) is a symbolist poem. It does not present a visual reality, the ostensible subject of the poem being a key to an ulterior theme; but the poem meanders into an insipid exercise in free association of ideas, some sort of "a stream of consciousness". The snowfall "has covered the ground with a white sheet of moonlight and makes ugly and dirty things appear fair and clean". This reminds the poet of "the divine grace which shows in everything the One Lord and, removing duality, leaves behind a homogeneity of the spirit" (rather recondite an analogy which, like the snowfall, lies thin for it only hides and covers but does not transmute the ugly and the dirty in life). More legitimately, perhaps, the snow reminds the poet of the Great Yogi, His body covered "with the ashes of complete renunciation"; and he wonders if to-night He would come upon the roof of the

house like the full moon and open the lotus-bud of his mouth, and if pearls would go back into the sea, being put tc shame by the whiteness of His teeth" (from a vision of transcendence to the teeth is a good example of bathos), The poet ends the poem with a pathetic picture of himself: "Will the frozen bush present to Him my picture? Will-someone somehow awaken in Him (the moisture of) affection towards me? What a snowfall!" (what a snowfall indeed!) .

To revert however to the other notable successes of Zinda Kaul: There are (a) the slow rhythm and the restrained emotion of the widow's lament, already noted, in the ghazal beginning

"yaaru'su'nde daadi do'dmut dil baharas kyaah kare";

(b) the sharply drawn sad picture of old age in *Haay Somsaar*;
(c) the lamentation of *Be'yi Saathaah Beh* (stay yet awhile);
(d) the pen-portrait in *Akh Tasveer* which is, unusually for Kashmiri, neither a *qasida* (panegyric) nor a *tanz* (satire): (e) the neat couplets of the ghazal beginning

"khaaka toodas baag-o bostaanaah ko'run"
(He turned a heap of dust into a garden);

(f) the even more exquisite quality of feeling in the ghazal beginning

"saanidaadic caarsaazas tas khabar aasyaasanaa"
(He who can remedy all our ills
might He not know our troubles and toils?)

and (g) the fervent prayer at the end of *Karanaavi* Ferryman) in which he bemoans the civic indiscipline and moral lapses of his time—

where all have a living faith in God
One, loving Father, Lord of all;
where ghosts, genii and spirits dark

do not hold sway over men's mind ;
where love, service and charity
are simple, supreme rules of life ;
where lands are vast and all have room to live ;
where all have work to do and none are idle ;
where disease and ugliness and evil ways of life
do not stunt and warp the growth of man ;
where wars are unknown, and the skies serene
do not rain down poison gas and savage death ;
where none suffer from want and fear—
to that city Beautiful, Ferryman,
take me and my countrymen.

An account of Zinda Kaul's life and work, however brief, must gratefully mention his scholarly edition of the poetical works of Paramanand in three volumes. He rescued them not only from oblivion but also from the corrupt versions of the text prevalent in his day. Though the edition cannot be said to be complete or definitive, omitting as it does many stanzas, particularly from *Siva Lagan*, yet those who come after him must remain indebted to him for the work he did. No one should have been able to edit the works of Paramanand as competently as he.

It is a high claim to make for him but it is true that, even out of the 35 poems of *Sumran*, three or four ghazals are among the best in Kashmiri and about half-a-dozen of Zinda Kaul's poems deserve a place in any anthology of Kashmiri poems however selective. His poems are rich in assonance and skilful rhymes ; he has given to Kashmiri verse some new rhyme patterns and stanza forms ; and though he has not the intensity and passionate apprehension of Lal Ded's *Vaakh* nor the ardour and ecstasy of Paramanand, he has given us memorable pictures imaging an aspirant's love for God. A few references as in *Karanaavi* notwithstanding, he was unaffected by the shortlived political idealism of the time. He has a gentle

humanitarian sentiment, even for birds and animals, as in *Rangu'tsa'r*. He has a quiet meditative quality and poignant thought; and his poetry reflects the man and his contemplative cast of mind. He has left us poems of sentiment and reflection, and he sings

> "Of melancholy fear subdued by faith,
> Of blessed consolations in distress."

As illustrative of his poetry, its doubt and interrogation as well as the certitude and faith founded in the testimony of his heart, the poem *Vadihe Manush* may be given here in English rendering.

> Man would weep,
> he would not gulp down his tears,
> but what availed it him to shed his tears ?
> What availed it him to drop blood from his eyes ?
> What availed it him to beat his head against a rock.
> Knowing that none heeds him,
> what drives him on still to sue for help ?
> What drives him on to shoot his darts at the void ?
> What compulsion ! What helplessness !
>
> Man—momently dying :
> by hunger, cold and thirst oppressed,
> by disease distressed, by worry harrassed,
> by fear and want and woe subdued.
> These sorrows o'er, by a hundred desires beguiled,
> his unsteady mind, not finding rest in anything here,
> still craves for a something, though unknown.
> The Good not seen by him, nor known by him,
> he yet would find as something lost,
> which he posse·sed before—
> like one who wakes with memory dim
> of the taste of wine he had in a dream.
> What misery—between want and desire !

Someone (they say) descried from afar
the sheen of His halo, in another time.
This our ears have heard,
this our hearts have believed ;
and we pine for Him
as for our Love offended and displeased,
who has fled and hid himself in solitude.
Lovesickness for no reason,
Lovesickness nought availeth.

Keeping aloof, in concealment far away.
to all entreaties deaf,
his ears (as if) stuffed up with cotton wool
does He ever enquire for us ?
Does He ever think of us, ever ask :
"Whom I have cast, mid darkness black,
on precipices steep, in forests thick—
what has befallen them ?"
Beauty's wanton indifference.

Man pleaded with his heart :
"He has no love,
Why sue to Him ?
Will a willow tree yield thee a pear ?
Knowest thou the path that leads to Him ?
What means of approach canst thou find ?"
But his mind—would it listen ?
Would it turn back ?
(And who can chain the wind ?)
And how is mind to blame ?
Is love an idle fancy ?

The sound in his ears is the echo of his Self.
The musk-deer chases the musk,
within him lodged but hidden from his sight,
running as only deer can run
across the hills and wilds.

So recklessly and fast
runs the heart of man,
which scents out his Love.
It will not let him rest,
it still must lead him on
to see Beauty blooming here,
and Beauty blooming everywhere,
inexhaustible and rare !
When the candle shows its flame,
Can a moth lie still, unconcerned ?
Rending Reason's garments seven*
Will man not follow up the scent ?
(What matters if the musk be hidden from his sight ?)
Is Beauty a vain illusive show ?

What bewilderment !
What resistless urge !
Wnat misery—between want and desire !
Lovesickness for no reason,
Lovesickness nought availeth.
Beauty's wanton indifference.
Is love an idle fancy ?
Is beauty a vain illusive show ?

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* Five indriyas, manas and buddhi

1947—1967

I

In a survey of the Kashmiri literary scene from 1947 to 1967 it is necessary to appreciate the impact of two non-literary events that have had a fundamental bearing on it, namely, the Pakistan-sponsored raid on Kashmir on the 22nd October, 1947, and the setting up of Radio Kashmir on the 31st of July 1948. The raid roused the people of Srinagar, the administrative as well as the literary capital city of Kashmir, as nothing else had done within living memory. They stood as one man to withstand, what to them was, naked aggression, an attempt at conquest and suppression of the self-identity of Kashmiris, at a time when they were about to wrest power from the ruling Maharaja and shape their own future. Even those who had not been enthusiastic about the socio-political changes envisaged in the New Kashmir programme formulated by the, then, National Conference, which had spear-headed the Quit Kashmir Movement in May, 1946, and those others who did not quite understand the full implication of what was happening—even these people were taken by surprise and swept off their feet by the spontaneous and united stand of the people against the raiders. This was an event in which they were emotionally involved to a much greater degree than they were in the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965 which was, by and large, felt to be a war between India and Pakistan. The crisis at the time was so overpowering that the writers and the intellectuals, the "progressives", could not retreat into their private worlds but became increasingly committed to the upheaval and to all that it meant. To them it was not merely a phenomenon they had read about and imaginatively sympathised

with ; it was history being made before their eyes. They could not stand aloof ; and under the compulsion of events began to play their part, producing literature primarily aimed at strengthening the people's resolve to withstand the aggressor and to hasten the socio-political changes which freedom would bring.

It must, however, be conceded that this sudden literary outburst should not have come about, and the crisis might have taken the writers and intellectuals unawares, if not passed them by, had they not developed social awareness even before the crisis came. This was largely due to the impact of the West, the national upsurge elsewhere in India, and the quickening pace of the freedom struggle in Kashmir from 1938. The impact of the West, its art and literature, science and social studies, was late in coming to Kashmir. It came later than it had come to the Punjab, delaying the stimulus it had given to the literary 'renaissance' elsewhere in India. At the turn of the century there were few schools teaching English. It was as late as in 1912 that S. P. College produced its first batch of four graduates ; and it took time for the impact to work its way, to seep through, as it were. By about the forties, however, the intellectuals were fairly well read in foreign classics in English and, through English, in the classics of French and, more so, of Russian—Turgenev, Chekov and Gorky. Besides, the impact of the New Writing in Urdu had also begun to be impressively felt by them about this time.

No account of contemporary Kashmiri literature will be complete without emphasizing the importance of the incentive the Radio Kashmir provided for its development. Its importance for all kinds of creative writing in Kashmiri, more so for the development of prose, has been much greater than for most other modern Indian languages which had a much richer literary tradition. To the Radio Kashmir we owe not only an abundant revival of popular interest in the indigenous forms of music and song, poetry and prose tale (*daastaan*) but the very

growth of functional prose and of modern literary art-forms like the radio play, the short story, the skit and the light essay. Apart from being a powerful medium for disseminating the written word, it proved an effective means of discovering new talent and encouraging the creation of new art-forms. For the first time, the Kashmiri writer had an adequate incentive to work, and the incentive was dependable.

In a survey of any contemporary literature there are inevitable difficulties in regard to the right historical perspective and a definitive assessment of living writers; but in the survey of Kashmiri literature there are other handicaps besides. Not even a quarter of what has been written has been printed; and even a considerable part of what has been printed is to be gleaned from the pages of magazines now defunct. The Kashmiri writer has had to work against great odds. There has been almost a total lack of a determined policy or programme of assistance from official or non-official agencies which has been available, after Independence, to the writers of other modern Indian languages. For want of adequate incentives no publisher has shown enterprise in publishing Kashmiri books in the approved script. Indeed, the State Government has not yet formulated a definite long-term policy in regard to the place Kashmiri should have in education and administration. There are religio-cultural-cum-political reasons for this into which one need not go here. But it may be said that even the few books that are published are not available because there is no agency through which they can be easily procured. In view of these handicaps it is possible here only to discern the new trends as seen in the few published books that are available and to select fewer still for a fuller notice.

II

The storm and stress of the forties found its most effective and direct expression in drama. More than any other

literary art-form, drama presents not only the soul but the very body of stirring times. The stage is a powerful means of placing before the people the problems of the day in an audio-visual form. Even before the raid, the stage was used from 1944 to 1946 for this purpose. While political plays had no chance of being approved for the stage by the State Censor, plays embodying themes from mythology or folk-lore and social plays were staged by several dramatic clubs like the S. P. College Dramatic Club and the Natak Vibhag of the Samaj Sudhar Samiti, Srinagar. Many of the plays were adaptations of Agha Hashar and Betaab but quite a few were original Kashmiri plays.* One of these plays, *Vidhwah* (The Widow), songs for which were written by the late poet Abdus Sataar Aasi, became popular for quite sometime. In 1946 an attempt was made to set up a theatre on the lines of the Indian Peoples Theatre (IPTA). The late Premnath Pardesi, a talented writer who wrote with equal ease in Urdu and Kashmiri, wrote the play, *Batahar* (The Food Quarrel), for the occasion, but the Censor did not pass it and the manuscript was confiscated and lost. But when the raid came and even while the fighting was on, the writers organised themselves into the Cultural Front under the leadership of G. M. Sadiq, known for his progressive views. The first completely Kashmiri play staged after the raid was *Shahid Sherwani* written by Premnath Pardesi. It had effective dialogues and dramatic situations ; the songs were written by the late poet Mahjoor ; but owing to faulty technique and lack of adequate stage

*The plays may be listed here : *Krishna Janam, Satyavahan Savitri, Druv Bhagat, Draupadi Ceerharan, Haba Khatoon, Sataraat* and *Akanandun* by Dinanath Dhar, ; *Citra* and *Samaj Ki Bhool* by Trilokinath Vaishnavi ; *Shankar Parvati* and *Krishna Sudama* by Sudhamaji ; *Vidhwah* and *Avlaad* by Shombonath Kaul ; *Sawaal, Ganga Jamuna* and *Tapasya* by Madhavlal Tiku. All these Kashmiri plays were produced by the Natak Vibhag, but none of them was published.

appurtenances, it did not come off well on the stage. Soon, however, the Front took the theatre to the countryside where it became very popular. It provided entertainment where there was little or none of it, and the topical plays staged brought the rural audiences, so to say, face to face with their own problems and created interest in them. Such were the short plays *Oor Baazaar* (The black market), *Tre' Bat'aa Tsot* (Three over four, the landlord's exorbitant share), *Zameen Grees Su'nz* (Land belongs to the tiller) and *Dollar Saheb* (Imperialists' machinations). Such were also, at a later date in 1955, the three short Flood plays, published in one volume as *Kuny Kath* (The One Theme), *Viz che' saa'ny* (Time is with us) by Ali Muhammad Lone, *Son Samsaar* (Our World) by Noor Muhammad Roshan, and *Pagaah chu gaashdaar* (Tomorrow will be bright) by Amin Kamil—all written to unite the people in the countryside to face the devastation wrought by flood as well as the intrigues of the landed vested interests. Meanwhile Mohi-ud din Hajini wrote *Grees Sund Gara* (A farmer's household) which was published in instalments in *Gulrez* from 1951 to 1953 and in book form in 1954. This 3-act play remains a closet play. It has not been staged and its significance deserves to be noticed in the section on prose. This, however, is not the case with Dinanath Nadim's fine opera play, *Bo'mbur ye'mbu'rzal* (1953). It is a symbolic play, exposing and defeating the conspiracies of Storm and Autumn against the Narcissus and the Bumble-Bee, who with their fellow-flowers symbolise the people and their aspirations for the spring and its joys. In its poetry, its finely written songs, deeply moving music evolved out of folk tunes, its richly meaningful theme at once profound and subtly revealed, its well-knit plot leading naturally to the complication and its denouement, and the totality of effect—this operatic play remains unmatched till this day. Even its success on the stage is not a true measure of its entire merit, for it is too demanding for the sets. In 1956 Nadim wrote another good symbolic

play, a poetic drama, *Neekee ta Ba'dee* (Good and Evil) which was successfully staged by the boys of Hindu High School, Srinagar. Nadim and Roshan's *Heemaal ta Naa'gyraay* did not quite come off because it mixed several techniques of the shadow play, the opera and the drama and also because the authors failed to handle the theme at the end which is artistically disappointing. Other operas may be mentioned: the little known *Bo'mbur ta Lolar* by Amin Kamil; *Zu' Gabar* by Premnath Dhar, a pure opera depicting Hindu-Muslim unity, simpler and easier to stage; and *Gulrez* by Ghulam Rasool Santosh. Some of these and other plays were written and produced for the Kashmir Festivals from 1956 to 1962, like *Haba Khatoon* by Amin Kamil, the symbolic *Nasti Hund Savaal* and *Sheeshi ta Sangistaan* by Akhtar Mohi-ud-din, but they fell flat on the stage. To encourage and organise on a permanent basis the artistic and literary activities of the State, the Government set up in 1958 the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and built the Tagore Hall in Srinagar which greatly facilitated the staging of plays. The Academy has been organising play competitions every year and awarding prizes for playwriting, production and acting and also staging the prize-winning plays in Tagore Hall like *Yiti chu banaan* (This too can happen) by Muhammad Subhan Bhat of Akingom and *Rehearsal* by Pushkar Bhan and Somnath Sadhoo. Motilal Kemmu has written *Gindan Paa'thu'r* and *Tshaay*; and some others have written some other plays which hardly deserve notice except the domestic play *Zoon ta Aftaab* by Roshan. The play deals with the relationship between man and wife and the social hypocrisies of the time. It was staged by the enterprising Dramatic Club of the Government Women's College, Srinagar, which, since 1956, has kept alive a fine tradition of play production in the State. The College also produced Roshan's *Vwazu'ly Gulaala*, a good translation of Tagore's *Rakta Korabi* (Red Oleanders). There have been some more translations: of Ibsen's *Wild Duck* (Thuj) by

Somnath Zutshi and Ghosts *(Tshaay)* by Akhtar Mohi-ud-din, both Sahitya Akademi publications ; of Tagore plays, *Mukta-dhara* by Ali Muhammad Lone, *Dak Ghar* by Amin Kamil, *Ritu Samhaar* (Sontuk Atagat) by Mirza Arif, also Sahitya Akademi publication. But none of these have been staged

Radio Kashmir has done excellent work in furthering radio-playwriting and has up to date broadcast about 350 such plays. A high standard has been maintained in many of them; and two humorous radio-plays, *Hero Macaama* and *Vaktuk Lukmaan* (The Solomon of the day) by Pushkar Bhan have been staged by the local Akashvani Club at the Tagore Hall. It is a pity that these plays, at least a few selected ones, have not been collected and published in a book form. A few years ago, the Radio also conducted a play competition which produced several good short plays like the forceful *Viji Vaav* (the Northern Gale) by Somnath Zutshi. Another impressive short play, *Taa'zybatun Kaan* (The arrow that never missed the mark), adapted from the English one-act play, *The Pot O' Broth*, by Ali Muhammad Lone, deserves mention.

Some of its slight successes notwithstanding, it must be said that Kashmiri drama is yet to make its mark. The best plays fail to move us, they merely titillate the mind. The playwrights have experimented with all sorts of production techniques but failed to outgrow the immaturity of early attempts. With the single exception of the farcical Macaama they have not given us an individualised memorable character. Some of the plays, like *Mo'dur Mas* (The Sweet Wine) by Somnath Zutshi, cannot sustain the success of the first one or two scenes and flounder thereafter. Kashmiri has failed to throw up an author with a forte for drama. The playwrights express concern with the current topical themes but without any profound understanding of them. The earlier Raid and the later Flood plays indulge in slogan-mongering and public-speaking. Their realism does not see into the psychology, the

inner tension of character and moral values. The best of them present a simulcrum of life without revealing deeper insights into life and character. They merely write for the audiences of the moment, completely submitting to the political trends and even slogans of the time. The contribution they make is more to prose than to drama.

III

Prose is the most significant gift of this period, and Radio Kashmir has contributed most to its development. Radio Kashmir had to feed the public, day in and day out, with news and commentaries on the news, with talks on current affairs as well as on literary, social, political and even scientific subjects; it had to devise a variety of programmes to suit different tastes and levels of education, to children and village audiences and to the sophisticated urban listeners. Skits and stories, plays and features, discussions and recitals had to be put on the air. Humour, satire, ridicule, irony and sarcasm had to be pressed into service for the programmes, particularly to make the propaganda and counter-propaganda against the so-called Azad Kashmir Radio effective and telling. Writers had to be found and guided to do what was wanted of them ; and the demand found them. Thus was prose of various kinds, descriptive, narrative, expository and emotive, developed over the years. In the absence of literary magazines, the Radio was perhaps the only means of providing opportunities to the writers to develop the personal or the light essay, "the loose sally of the mind" ; and it did so in its literary programmes like "Sangarmaal" and "Pamposh". Many of these essays, spiced with sarcasm and humour, opened out a new direction for prose writing.

This is, however, not to deny or even to under-estimate that, about the time of the raid, some writers, notably Nadim, Roshan and Zutshi, made earnest attempts at writing prose and short stories. Here also Nadim was the innovator, though he

soon found that short story writing was not in his line and gave up the attempt. His short stories, *Ray* (Blight) and *Javaabee Kaard* (The Reply-paid Post card) unmistakably showed that he had to go a long way to succeed in this genre ; but though he had the talent, he was not the man to practise the art. *Ray* is blatant propaganda while *Javaabee Kaard* fizzles out at the end. Other stories of the raid years like *Sheena pyato pyato*, *Nehgat'a*, *Yel'i pho'l praagaash* and *Zoon* by Nadim, Roshan, Zutshi and Aziz Haroon, respectively, are even more blatant. These early attempts, whether at short stories or drama, had not, however, been wasted. They helped the writers to discover the potentialities for serious writing of a language which they had known only as a vehicle of ordinary conversation. The search for new words and phrases to express new thoughts and feelings, the use of old words and native colloquial idiom in new contexts and connotations, the incisiveness of dialogue, and the taut and sequacious sentence construction stood the writers in good stead. They learnt to give variety to their sentences by varying the pitch, the pace and the pause. A single instance, from Hajini's *Grees Sund Gara*, should make this clear.

R : tse' kyaah chuy az buthis pyat'h bom pashpaan, yora syo'd va'nith chakh ora nasyti kiny kath karaan po'z gavnaa yee ye'ti pyat'ha caani kambra pyat'ha loor va'tsh tati pyat'ha vuchmak tsu' me' do'ha khwata do'ha hu'naan

W : pe'yihee gara pyat'h ta phikri tarihee, khe'y khe'y chukh srand'a gomut, garuk a'ndu'ry tsoor zaanan timay yiman gara pyat'h pyav

R : ava me' kati che' khabar tse' chiy swakhas duu's gaa'mu'ty, khyana manza vo'kus aamut, me aa's khabar se'dis ka'lis khwadaa raa'zy magar se'zi o'ngji kati chu gyav khasaan

W : tsu' khaa'lyze haji o'ngji, bo ti mwaklu'haa' ye'mi vwandu'-mazra nishi

R : yi vwandu'-mazra con chu kas ? me' do'has ta rataas rath neraan tsu' gari bihith taaph divaan, caani khwata vwandu'-mazar chu kas ? me' maamlu'ki ryata loryav suu'ty maaz tsat'aan tsu d'o'khaa traa'-vith navan do'han zu' ser vonun kataan, ami khwata vwandu'-mazar kas aasi ? me' karzdaar d'oryav ra't'y ra't'y a'nith ryata path ryata muclaka hyavaan ta tsu' .

W : tsu' vadaan hay kyaah banyom yithi raani nishi mo'nd' aasunuy jaan, me' ka'r na kath na baath oray aav d'yakas tsa'ku'r ladith zan chus buthis pyat'h hoon mormut...

Prose was also practised in the columns of Journals like *Kwangposh*, the organ of the Cultural Conference, the name given in 1953 to the Cultural Front which in 1950 had already been re-named Cultural Congress This journal had been started in late 1949 and with, shorter or longer breaks, continued till 1962. Another Journal of the kind, *Gulrez*, was started by Mirza Arif in 1952 but stopped publication in about three years *Pamposh*, started at Delhi in August 1957, and *T'ameer*, a monthly of the Government Information Department, continued publication for a few years during which they allotted space to Kashmiri. Ghulam Nabi Khayaal started the weekly *Watan* in 1964 and, since 1966, Ghulam Rasul Santosh has been editing a literary monthly, *Kaa'shur Adab*. More regular and of much higher standard are the annual *Son Adab* and the bi-annual Kashmiri *Sheeraaza* issued by the State Academy. These two magazines contain research articles and essays in criticism by several writers. This has been a welcome trend ; and prose in the writings of these writers has begun to have conciseness, verve and exactness of expression.

There have been other welcome and significant contributions to prose. They are (a) the two good collections of essays and research papers by Mohi-ud-din Hajini, namely, *Kaa'shri Nasru'c Kitaab* and *Maqaalaat* ; (b) *Kaa'shri Adbu'c Taa'reekh* (History of Kashmiri Literature Vol I) by Autar Kishan Rahbar, the first of its kind, a work which entailed painstaking effort ; and (c) the introductions to several Academy publications. Among these last may be mentioned the well-written 60-page introductory essay to *Valiullah Motoo* by M. Y. Teng ; the 31-page introduction to *Mahmud Gami* by G. N. Khayal ; learned prefatory essays to *Raamaayan* by Baljinath Pandit, to *Luka Baa'th* by A. M Lone, to *Kaa'shryuk Alaaqa Vaadaphera* (The regional variations of Kashmiri speech-forms) by the author, Abdul Khaliq Tak, and to *Sufi Shaayir* by Amin Kamil.

Amin Kamil's introductions to the three volumes of *Sufi Shaayir* total 152 pages in which the author discusses the origins, tenets and spiritual disciplines of Sufism, Vedanta and Trika Saivism of Kashmir. They are a first attempt at religio-philosophical exposition in Kashmiri, a laudable attempt though marred by several grave faults. Firstly, they are a mere rehash of other writer's opinions, often born of prejudice and ignorance ; and the author has not discussed the merit of the controversial views. The Gita is a medley, a hotchpotch, (*khyatsu'r*, vol. 2, P 27) of monotheism and monism ; the decay of Vedanta was due to idol-worship (*pwatu'ly poozaa*, vol. 2, P. 40) ; Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj arose "soon after the Musalmans set foot in India" (vol. 2, P. 40). As a matter of fact Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj were the response to and reaction against the challenges of modern knowledge and Christian missionary zeal for proselytisation in northern India as, during the earlier medieval times the Bhakti movements and Sikhism were to the confrontation with Islam. These and other such statements are, however, the author's opinions albeit indiscriminately borrowed ; and

the author is entitled to them. Secondly, the author has not clearly brought out the correspondence between the Trika religio-philosophy and Kashmiri Sufi poetry as he promised to do (vol. 1, p. 54, ll 1—3). Nor has he corroborated with pertinent quotations his thesis (vol. 2, p. 9), that apart from Vedanta, an understanding of Trika Saivism is necessary for a proper understanding of the Sufi poets of Kashmiri. Thirdly, there are wrong factual statements for which, in a work of this kind, there can hardly be any justification. For instance : *a*, Valmiki's *Ramayana* contains one hundred and ten thousand verses, *akh lach ta da'h saas shaar*, (vol. 2, P. 25) ; *b*, the Purusha is the twenty-fifth tattva (*pu'ntsuhyum*, vol 3, P. 47) while it is the twelfth ; *c*, there are four ways to *mukti* (*tsor tareeqa*, vol. 3, P. 55) while the three well-known *upayas* are *Aanavopaaya*, *Shaaktopaaya* and *Shaambhavopaaya* ; *d*, Atman is man's consciousness which in the waking state sees the impure things (*kassef ceez*, vol. 2, P. 44), while it is the ever-wakeful ground beyond the states of waking, dream and dreamless sleep. Lastly, there are a large number of mistakes of orthography, too many to enumerate. Some of them are grotesque, like بھاگوت گیتا (Bhaagvat Gita) for بھگوت گیتا (Bhagavat Gita), ھرنی گرم (Harnee garm) for ھرنیگربھه (Hiranyagarbha), مکش , (makush) for موکھش (moksha), پرے نام (Parenaam) for پرانایام (praanaayaam), تانتر (taantar) for تنتر (tantra or, in Kashmiri, tantu'r), سوم نند (Som Nand for سومانند (Somanand), اھم برھم اسی (aham Braham asee) for اھم برھماسم (aham Brahamaasmi); and جنان (jnaan) پرتی بجن (pratibijan), یجناو لکیا (yajnaavalkyaa) for گیان (gyaan , پرتبگیا (pratibigyaa), یاگنولک (yaagnivalka), respectively. There is no justification, linguistic or otherwise, for misshaping these words, notwithstanding the fact that Sanskrt ज्ञ is transliterated into Roman *jna*, because their pronunciation is already set and familiar to those who use these words in Kashmiri and they can adequately be written in the

Kashmiri alphabet without being so misshaped. The author has. however, rightly coined some words like تتا (ti-taa) for "thatness" (tattva) for instance. For these reasons, Amin Kamil's contribution consists not in these long introductions but rather in his brief comments on the life and poetry of Sufi poets.

Abdul Khaliq Tak's book is, on the contrary, a valuable work of linguistic research. The author indicates *tehsil*-wise speech variations and, at places, explains the reasons for the similarities and differences found in them. He has widened the scope of his survey to include the bilingual tract surrounding the Valley to illustrate the interaction of Kashmiri and other neighbouring languages. He has also given a 20-page illustrative section on the language used by the Kashmiri writers as also a more useful 85-page section on the technical terms in use in the various professions like those of carpenters masons, smiths, wood-carvers, weavers and embroiderers. A survey like this is valuable not only from a linguistic but also from a literary point of view, for it preserves a word-hoard from extinction and provides the writer with new words for new concepts, objects and metaphors and with variants for other words already in use. These last can, in the hands of a discriminating writer, become synonyms. similar but not identical in meaning, to be distinguished by their use in certain, though not all, contexts. The survey will thus enrich the language.

There have also been a few prose translations: of Tagore's *Chokher Bali* (*A'ch Kitur*) and Vinoba Bhave's *Gita Pravachan* by P. N. Pushp; of Aristotle's *Poetics* (*Poet'ikaa*) by G. N Khayal, the value of which mostly lies in its 38-page lucid introductory essay (*Zaan*) to the subject; and of *the Arabian Nights* (*A'lif Laila*), a successful translation from the original Arabic, by Hajini. There have also appeared a few translations of short stories of O'Henry, Chekov, Gorky, Prem

Chand and others, notably of Gorky's *Man is Born* by Rahman Rahi. There have been a few children's books,* some of which have won prizes, notably the Kashmiri translation of *Don Quixote* by Shamlal Sadhu while his English translation of a Kashmiri folktale, "The Haunted Mosque", has been included in the anthology of ghost stories by famous authors, *Thin Air* by Alan C. Jenkins (Blackie). Sadhu has recently published another children's book *Vutshaprang* (The magic carpet). The 3-volume slender edition of folktales, *Poshitha'r* (Lalla Rookh) and a one-volume collection, *Daleela* (J and K Academy) are worthwhile publications though the flavour of folktale narrative is largely missing in them. A. M. Lone has written *A'sy ti chi yinsaan* (we too are human), a travelogue in the form of a novel based on the pilgrimage to Sri Amaranatha which, in spite of a few dialogue fragments, gives us neither the visual reality of the scenic beauty of the trek nor a satisfying novel. Amin Kamil's *Gat'i manz gaash* (light in darkness) employes the *daastaan* technique for a story presenting the theme of Hindu-Muslim unity during the raid ; but it has failed to make the grade.

IV

More than all this, the creative prose literature of the time found its expression in the short story. Several collections** of short stories have been published, though many more stories lie still unpublished or scattered among the stray pages

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**Poshimaal* by S. mnath Sadhoo, *Gandhijiyun Lwaku'caar* tr. by Bishambarnath Kaul, *Mwakhta Lar* by Rahbar and Naji Munawar, *Baalu'yaar* by S. N. Bhat Haleem, *Shuryan Hun'dy Baa'th* by Naji, *Bhartu'ci Looku katha*, Publications Division, Govt. of India, *Mwalu'ly Tajruba* tr. Ghulam Mohd Wani.

****Sathsangar* and *Swanzal* by Akhtar, *To'brukh* by Rahbar, *Sheesha ta Sangistaan* and *Loosymu'ty Taarakh* by Sufi Gh. Muhammad, *Baal Maraa'yo* and *Yinsaan chu yithay badnaam* by Bansi Nirdosh, *Zitni Zool* by Shankar Raina, *Muntakhib Afsaana* edited by Santosh and *Kathi Manz Kath* by Amin Kamil.

of defunct magazines. The first collection, *Sathsangar* (Seven Hill-tops) was published in 1955 and it deservedly won for Akhtar Mohi-ud-din the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award in 1958. There are in it stories of atmosphere, of mind's inner working, memorable situations, and character ; there is also suspense and dramatic effect, realistic portrayal of life and social sensibility. Akhtar's diction and idiom are remarkable for freshness and racy piquant flavour. His Breest Vaatul, Gula Badmaash and Na'bir Shaala are unforgettable characters even though drawn in a compressed manner on a limited canvas. Two of his stories, *Dand Vazun* and *Da'ry-yaayi yezaar*, remain unequalled so far ; nor has Akhtar himself succeeded in writing more of such stories, possibly because he has switched too early to experiment with new kinds of technique in settings very different from the milieu which he knows and understands and over which he has a rare grip. *Da'ry-yaayi yezaar* is a remarkable story without a story. It impressively succeeds in recapturing the fleeting moment of romance of an earlier day ; and *Dand Vazun* reveals the essential humanity where one least expects it, among the unsophisticated, uncultured scavengers, who form the rude scum of society. It is a pity that Akhtar has not followed the success he achieved in these stories or in the first and the only novel of his up to date, *Dod Dag*.

Dod Dag is a short novel (not a long short story) of 136 pages, and has the distinction of being the first novel in Kashmiri. It is, in the main, the story of two sisters, Faata and Raaja, who lose their parents in early childhood. The central character is, however, the younger sister Raaja, loving, generous and lively, even vivacious, and positive, and quick to repent her impulsiveness. She is the heroine not because, her moral lapses notwithstanding, she is an admirable character in a work of fiction but because her qualities of character are

structurally related to the well-organised and compact plot. She is sensitive, emotional and impulsive in decision. It is these qualities that motivate her actions and bring about the humiliating misery on herself and, by an inevitable irony of circumstance, on her beloved sister. The novel is concerned with human relationship in a particular social set-up and centres round marriages and divorces. Other characters are there, chiefly men ; and the situations become complicated till divorce and death intervene and Raaja and her second husband, Abdul Ghani, are left alone. The novel ends, as it must end, where the travail and tension of their lives end, when the libertine Abdul Ghani is sobered, even chastened, into love and nuptial fidelity but not till Raaja has lost her physical attractiveness and is tubercular.

Reading *Dod Dag* is a satisfying experience albeit a sad one; and it deepens our social awareness. It is not a problem novel raising issues or propagating ideas. It is a frank and uninhibited portrayal of life as it is ; and if there is adultery, well, there is adultery. But the author is not neutral and we have, besides, the feeling that though Raaja surrenders her body (and in the circumstances this becomes almost inevitable for her), yet her mind and heart are not involved. It is sheer nonsense to accuse Akhtar of "dirty mindedness". Very subtly and unobtrusively the objective portrayal of the suffering and humiliation of the orphan sisters, their "sickness and pain" deepens our understanding of a social milieu, ignorant, petty and cruel, and of its values and attitudes. Unobtrusively also is our sense of the social background quickened by the impact of economic slump in the *namda* trade on human character and and relationship. The author has a grip on characrer ; there is no over-simplification, and the complexity of characters is revealed as the situations develop, the plot thickens and the characters and events interact on one another. All the characters (they are not many) are finely drawn, each one of them

individualised, human and recognisable. The scope of the novel and the range of characters, all of whom come from the lower classes, is limited. This is mentioned as a fact, not as a flaw, for the author writes about what he knows and understands; and he writes in a style which has the qualities of fluency, clearness and variety. It is not loaded with embellishment though it can be impressive and picturesque at times. What is more, the seemingly descriptive interludes like the *shikara* ride in the lake are structurally connected with the story and further the plot. For instance,

"It was noon and sunlight shot through the limpid waters of Dal Lake weaving a pattern of stairways that seemed to descend to the very bottom. Small fish swam in rows, now hiding themselves in water weeds. now peeping out on the surface. They appeared very playful, reminding one of the dear toddlers playing hide and seek in their kindergartens. At some distance the lotus on the azure waters touched by sunrays sparkled like stars on the sapphire sky and drops of water on their broad green petals scintillated like pearl on plates of jade. The willows, their branches thick with newly sprouted leaves waved gently and rhythmically as if country lasses were dancing a *rohv* dance on the shores of the lake; while all around stood tall mountain peaks enveloped in light cumulus clouds as if the tribal patriarchs were watching their grand-children and great grand-children, so many of them, and smiling a smile of serene satisfaction.

"Faata had only one thought coming to her again and again: "Would God that I were cured of this fell sickness!" But Raaja was young and healthy, and the beauty of the scene awakened her youth. Her veil dropped to her shoulders, revealing her raven locks; and she realized as keenly as never before that her husband was an old widower while she was young—young to be the spouse, say, (and why not?) of Abdul Ghani. The thought made her blush. She stole a look at

Abdul Ghani, who was casting lovelorn stealthy glances at her. And she felt pleased."

There is only one flaw in the novel. The scene of divorce between Shama Saa'b and Faata does not carry instant emotional conviction It comes about too suddenly, and we are not well prepared for it, nor for the quiet submission of Shama Saa'b to the Mohalla Elders' decree. This, the first novel of the author, is remarkable not for the promise it holds but for what it achieves.

The nine stories in Rahbar's *To'brukh*, with their obssesive flashback technique, unsuited ornate diction, excessive use of exclamation marks and dots and, above all, their pointlessness, are all marked out as an immature exercise in story writing It is the stories like *Asha* and short radio plays which Rahbar wrote later that show promise but they are yet unpublished in a book form. The stories in the other collections enrich the denotation of Kashmiri short story, and some of them strike a new note. Such are, for instance, Sufi Ghulam Muhammad's *Ajab Malik ta Noshlab*, romance and love in a poor man's home ; his *Tsu'ni Tsoor*, a psychological study of how poor men's labour is exploited ; and *Maal Dyad*, an unforgettable portrayal of character in a bazaar locale. In his *Loosymu'ty Taarakh* he gives us character sketches of representative types now becoming extinct with the new socio-economic changes. Bansi Nirdosh's *Tulu'r* is a memorable story which 'clicks' at the end where it gives an unexpected but welcome surprise and lends a deeper meaning to it. In his *Khotsun*, he weaves an atmosphere of horror and, in *Baraat*, there is not only an element of horror but a sense of overpowering fate. Another significant story of his is *Kaa'nsi mo raa'vin shoote paan*. With his *Zitni Zool* Shankar Raina made his debut as a story writer ; and stories like *Vwany Kaha'nz Cha Vaa'ry* (whose turn next), *Hochmu'ts Tha'r* (the dried creeper) are, what may be called,

Hospital stories, written with sensitivity and an observant eye. Perhaps, even more significant is his *Lwakci lwakci katha* (little little stories) which narrates the little things that engage the minds of people but which, after all, are not so insignificant, making as they do the warp and woof of life. Other short stories that strike new directions are Akhtar's *Aadam chu ajab zaat*, *Mahamdoo valdi Lasoo ;* Deepak Kaul's *Kun Musaa'fir* and *Tshaamp* ; Santosh's *Duru'*-joory ; Taj Begum's *Khwash fahmi* and *Asataan d'ed'ital* ; Umesh Kaul's *A'd' Kath, Baazar* and *Dil* ; Hriday Bharati's *Teh* and *Shikast,* the latter the strange story of a young man who, unable to get from life what he desired, turned an unrepentent cynic and, in his death, had his revenge on life.

Not all of these stories or collections of them are of equal merit which distinguishes all the ten stories of Amin Kamil's *Kathi Manz Kath.* It contains the remarkable *Kwakar jang* (the cockfight) with its memorable characterisation of Shahmaal and Jaanabits, drawn obliquely through, and by means of, their respective cocks ; *Jahnami* (The reprobate), a terrible satire on rulers and Governments of the day ; *No'v Taavan* (the new plague), depicting moral laxity which has begun to corrode society ; *Po'tkal* (private anxiety), a psychological study of a childless village belle ; Aa'nu' (the mirror), a study of an old man's re-awakened love ; and *Pya'nd' Puran* (the dwelling house and the farm), which gives us an insight into the change effected by the new agricultural policy of land to the tiller in men's minds and morals and human relationship. This is a varied fare but all the stories, as stories, achieve a standard as does the fine *Aabasar ta Kanipal* (the lake and the rock) which succeeds in creating an atmosphere of nature conducive to the stirrings of suppressed and unsuspected love in a language admirable for its clearness, simplicity and impressiveness. To quote in translation, it begins

"It was autumn with its golden russet-hued days. The

sun had gone down behind the mountain, and was now hidden from the sight ; but it still cast a cluster of rays and faintly illumined the sky. Birds in flocks, singly or in pairs, were winging on their way to their nests and night's rest.

"All on a sudden, a thin mist stole over the valley. Through this thin, gauze-like mist, the eye could not see far and the horizon narrowed to the immediate surroundings of the open wold. The north wind began to blow gently, shaking the yellow-tinted tree leaves. Soon the evening star came out, shining aloft, alone, through the mist.

"In a few moments, the last pigeon, separated from the flock, could be seen flying through the misty sky to its nest somewhere far away ; and for a while its flight seemed to stir the still silent atmosphere. Then the last glow on the sky faded, and it began to be dark except for a star here and a star there that burst on the sky. There was a hushed stillness and the cold evening darkness enveloped the view. The birds had gone to their nests, but Hajira was still on the open verandah, alone and no one about, sitting motionless as if frozen and insensible to her surroundings, to the russet glow of the sunset as well as to her own condition—that she was a woman, young and attractive but alone and lonely."

V

For a proper assessment of what was written about 1955 and after, short story as well as poetry, theme as well as technique, it is necessary to take note of the disillusionment that had come about. The earlier enthusiasm of 1947—1950 had worn off and, while socialism in a vague and undefined sense was still in the air, the writers ceased to be occupied merely with socio-political propaganda. They were no longer loud and declamatory,and they shed the rhetoric aimed at winning audiences. On the contrary, they began seeing into what had happened in the meantime and the effect on, and the response.

from, men and women around them. They exposed the seamy side of life, the loosening of the family grip and of the old acceptances of private and social life of the power of old hierarchic landed classes replaced, often enough, by that of the *nouveau riche* and their brash behaviour. They observed the hazards of female education of freedom of behaviour, freer intercourse between communities, of tight dress revealing the body contours and its social consequences. They felt frustrated and even cheated by those in whom they had, in their youthful idealism, placed their faith. Like many other writers elsewhere in India, they turned sceptical, even bitter.

> Our leaders prayed to other gods
> But God is good and prayer heeds ;
> So some got wealth and some got name
> Only the poor remained the same.

So sang a poet ; but Mirza Arif was more blunt :

> "pujee badlaan khashuk suy pron do'stoor"
>
> (Butchers come and butchers go,
> But slaughter goes on as before)

We find these trends in prose as well as in poetry. After the exuberance and enthusiasm of the years 1947 to 1952, their angry polemical verse and patriotic sentimentalities, there is a sobering down of the muse. There is less declamation of emotional commonplaces,and a gentle irony tempers the rhetoric of the verse. There is a deeper insight into things and the tone is less assertive and the poets' receptivity more thoughtful. Their themes are no longer merely topical; and there is a good deal of technical virtuosity and experimenting with verse patterns, rhyme and stanza schemes, irregular and free verse. There is also a search for new forms like the sonnet, and new imagery to replace the old 'literary lumber' of poetry. Side by side, the traditional verse continues with its vague emotions

and inchoate vocabulary. One misses in it the particular perceptions which derive from the immediacy of intensely felt experience though, sometimes, a phrase or a line may blaze with uncommon energy. The best traditionalists are Rasa Javidani, Mohi-ud-din Nawaaz, G.A. Fazil, Faroq Badgami, Peer Shams-ud-din Hairat, and the sufi poet Ahad Zargar. Even the younger poets give the impression, particularly in their *nazms*, that they take the easier path and do not try to come to grips with and overcome the difficulty of verse.

The year 1955 saw the publication of several slender volumes of verse like Dinanath Vali Almast's *Baalayapaari* (This side of the hill), Arjandev Majboor's *Su boozin* (Let him hear), and Pitambarnath Dhar Fani's Hubaab (The bubble). They are all in the traditional verse form though, here and there, one can see an attempt being made to introduce 'progressive' sentiments in vogue at the time as in *Su boozin*. Malik Imam-ud-din Makhmoor and Abdul Ahad write on the trite theme of love, also in the traditional style ; and Muhammad Khalil Dar of Zuvahom sometimes on the tyranny of the times, high prices and hard-hearted bureaucracy which bring, again, and again, the old—

"phiry phiry anaan suy pron".

Ghulam Ahmad Fazil (b. 1914-) has published his poems in a one-volume edition, *Kalaami Fazil*, and a selection entitled *Sarood*. Fazil is a popular poet in the tradition of Rasul Mir and Mahjoor. He writes on simple themes in a popular vein and has successfully tried several short, dancing metres. Most of his ghazals have a song-like quality His best poems, *Kraala Koor* (The Potter's daughter), *Zooni manz D'al* (Dal Lake in moonlight), *Bram dith Saqi* (Lured by the Saqi), have a fine excess while his poetry is generally characterised by sensuousness. His *Tasveeri Gam* is a collection of short elegies in popular rhyme-schemes on the martyrdom of Karbala. They

are less formal than the elegies in *O'sh ta Aab* (Lalla Rookh publications); but we miss in them the significance of the sacrifice or the solemn atmosphere befitting it, which demanded a longer and slow-moving rhythm. Like Fazil, Nandlal Ambardar (b. 1915—) writes in the traditional style. Though he has a wider range of theme, being touched by the new themes in vogue soon after 1947, his style continues to be sensuous and romantic, and there is a monotony in the rhythms he employes. He has written much and has produced two large volumes of verse which still await publication. Ghulam Hasan Beg Arif (b. 1910—) has switched over to *rubaiyat* which succinctly express the failure of the revolution, sometimes with biting sarcasm and irony.

1 Tomorrow, I have heard it said, that Thou
wouldst punish the usurer, the capitalist,
and the tyrant bureaucrat. Meanwhile, today,
the poor must suffer the agonies of Hell.
What profiteth Thy justice of the Judgement-day ?

*2. The capitalist called him scum
and fed him on his crumbs.
The political juggler called him king
and robbed him of his rags.
The poor have for ages seen
the changing make up of the knaves.

*3. Satan arranged a jolly fete—
the fees were high, the crowds were huge.
Intellect is now clean of the rust of honesty,
and religion is now an ace of trumps.

*4. Political friendship is a paper boat ;
do not lie on it like the foolish word.
Remember, if you would fare forward,
the wave of time obeys the wind of self-interest.

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*Translations by Trilokinath Raina

Khizar Maghribi continues to write humorous verse and parody, and Ghulam Nabi Firaq, besides writing poetry which has not been published in a collected form, occupies himself with translating English poems into Kashmiri verse. His translations of Keats's 'Ode to Nightingale', Tennyson's 'Ulyssees', and a few more poems have been well received Noor Muhammad Roshan wrote verse in the post-1947 period along with Dinanath Nadim, but not much of him has been heard for a long time, though he had, as in his poem entitled *the Spring,** shown a recognizable modern trend in his poetry.

> When the spring breeze crossed over the mountain,
> the clouds packed up their dull grey shawls ;
> the sky turned blue as a sapphire ;
> the sun laughed from behind the distant peaks ;
> the mountain snow perspired like a bashful
> nymph in confusion,
> giving birth under her mantle to infant rills.
> Beholding this, streams leapt wildly forth,
> bounding over rocks like churned, foaming milk ;
> and kissing on the forehead the waterfalls,
> they cried, 'Our darling Spring has come !"

Ghulam Rasul Santosh has written not only richly sensuous lyrics and songs but a whole book of sonnets. He has written sonnets in the octave-sestet and three-quatrains-and-a-couplet form as well as attempted to naturalize other rhyme-scheme and even, what may be called, the blank verse sonnet. The practice of this strict form should stand him in good stead, for it will restrain the flow of romantic images, as in *Lakhci chu lakhcun* (Lakhci's Mole). Here is a sonnet of his on the night.

> A star came tumbling down the sky
> and splintered against the night's dark glass.

*Translation by Trilokinath Raina

It flashed and fell. I felt a pang.
And, on the earth, behind the wall,
a pair locked in embrace, close as
the mouth of thirst to a water fount ;
a wail—someone is dead.
a shout of joy—someone is born,
a son to a young mother, perhaps.
Here looks plight troth, there an owl's screech.
Someone lets her body for hire,
desire deflowering a jessemine youth.
Thought leads to thought, scraping
my wounded heart. And night looks on

It is refreshing to read *Zolana* (Fetters), a collection of Muzaffar Azim's poems and ghazals. Ghazal seems to be his forte ; and he is one of the few of whom this can be said. His poetry represents, in a measure, some of the main trends of the day, the mental unrest and anchorless life of the time. Chamanlal Chaman's collection of verse, *Shabna'my Shaar*, also shows promise. Chaman's forte is the *nazm* which lacks the economy and concentration of the ghazal. His poems, mostly on love, overflow with an excess of romanticism but he has made experiments in technique as well as in theme as, for instance, in *Husn goshi goshe*, a descriptive poem on the round of seasons ; *Shar*, unfulfilled yearning ; *Ye'mi saata pheraan chum*, longings and regrets ; *Guma gay pat'y*, a picture of inner desolateness; and *Me' maa la'jma'ts nazar* (the evil eye) which is translated below.

Time was, when I would look around,
sunrise illumined the darkened skies,
tulips bloomed in desert wastes,
hope blossomed on all sights and scenes,
all homes thrilled me as my own home.

But now—
my gown is torn from collar to hem,

my heart is a heavy long cold sigh.
My eyes, lustreless and sad—
they see not what they saw before.
The market-place, deserted, bleak,
where everyone cuts everyone dead.
Not that we have any secrets to keep
but thoughts refuse to get into words,
and there's hardly a word to say.
We are masked men, estranged, forlorn ;
and must put on a face to meet our friends.

I fear the river may burst its banks
and erode the foundations of my house,
those hills might soon be sold
and lands measured and meted out,
my claims to all I prize denied,
and I thrown as a refugee on the roads.
At Lal Chowk naked and bare I stand,
jeered at as if the houses and the shops
had all caught fire and sooty tongues of flame
were mocking me with black devilish laughter.

I sit huddled in a roofless house,
my past decried, my learned lore forgot,
tongue-tied, not able to raise my hand
even to beg, nor able to say my thoughts
that scrape my breast. All things awry.
The lamp-stand no longer stands aright,
I cannot trust its flickering light.

I am now dead to my old self.
Life and death are meaningless words.
My house that was, broken into
and by strangers possessed ; and I,
a manufactory which no one owns.
I have lost the way to my own home.
once windowed out onto open skies,

and none is there to light my way.

I had hoped blossoms would not end,
and joy would greet me everywhere.
What really is the matter with me ?

The *nazms* of Chaman and Azim have larger scope and unity of theme and impression. Khayal's *Praagaash* is a juvenilia. His *Zanjeerihund Saaz*, a collection of prison poems, written during his 18 months in jail, lacks distinction.

In poetry, as in short story unsuccessfully) and opera (eminently successfully), the distinction of being the innovator goes to Dinanath Nadim (b. 1916—). He brought into being the new verse. It did not modify the tradition—it sharply departed from it. In the years following 1947, his was the trumpet voice in the vigorous verses of *Jangbaaz khabardaar* (Beware, warmonger !) and *Bo' gyavana az* (I will not sing today). The best poem of this earlier period is, unquestionably, his *Shyamji Zinaabad*, which has been admirably rendered into English by Trilokinath Raina.

Comrade :
My Comrade-in-arms !
Why does not our song sound in your ears ?
Tired ? Why lie you down when the journey's not done ?
Wherefore should you slumber when our work is just begun ?
Watered with your blood, won't you see the garden bloom ?
Won't you wait for a new time's dawn that'll be soon ?
Is it right for the architect of future to assume
Death, my comrade—
My Comrade-in-arms ?

Don't I hear what you would say ?
Don't I know to what you were a prey ?

Chill blasts of poverty made you fade before your noon ;
For medicine means money—and your sun set soon ;
But even in the claws of death
You remembered the plighted troth ;
To the flame of new resolves you played the happy moth ;
You cannot die for you are the beacon on our path,
For ever, my Comrade—
My Comrade-in-arms !

You are no more—but what of that ?
Can fire for ever slumber ?
You are no more, but your fiery emanation can never die !
It'll flower into a myriad spark, and grow, but never die !
Dead coals, infected, will glow, and grow, but never die !
Coals glow into a blazing fire, and grow, but never die !
My lyre has caught this tune, my song this stirring theme
From you, my comrade—
My Comrade-in-arms !

Kashmiri verse had not known this vigour, this noble rhetoric. Words come to Nadim, right words in the right place, quite unbidden in an unhindered flow, whatever the pitch and key of the note. He discovers words for any context ; and old familiar words sparkle with new meanings even in the classical ghazal which he infuses with new vigour and new imagery. He was the first to naturalize new techniques and new forms, of the sonnet for instance. He and, soon after, others, notably Rahman Rahi and Amin Kamil, had something new to say and they strove to find new means of expression, new images, new metaphors and similes. Of his own poems Nadim had rightly said that they introduced new ideas, new kinds of music and versification :

"chi asi baa'th na'vy
naghma na'vy, shaar na'vy"

Amin Kamil distinguishes his verse in the same way ;

"guftaar judaa myon, afsaana judaa myon
andaazi bayaan myon alag, shaana judaa myon
manzil alag, maqsad badal, saamaana judaa myon"

And, among themselves, these three poets succeeded in giving a completely new direction to poetry, towards a modernity of outlook, theme and style. Their poetry is marked by a creative use of language, precision and concreteness, attention to the verbal texture of verse and the adroit phrase, and a painstaking attempt to select the right word to convey the felt experience. Economy of style and a sudden 'juxtaposition of ideas' make for surprisingly new word-combinations, inevitably bringing with them some obscurity, particularly in some poems of Rahi and Kamil. From *Sanavu'ny saaz*, through *Nav roz sabaa*, Rahi has travelled far to his present-day poetry as Kamil has done from his *Masmalar* of 1955 to his *Lava ta Prava* of 1965 ; yet the accent of new poetry can be traced not only in their later but also earlier poetry. Illustrations (italics mine) abound.

Rahi

1. boni tshaayan *kaa'ʈ kha'ts*, ye'my
   zoonu'gaashan *voony khaab*

2. zindagee baasaan ye'mi vizi
   gaashiros *maskaa'sy bud'*

Kamil

3. subuh pho'l zan gaamu'yaavan
   naa'ly tshun *dwabidraav potsh*

4. tshaayinu'y laji *praayi*, aalam
   soo ba soo *d'abahor* gav

5. aashkan aa's na *shaa'nil* asi bronh

6. zeet'h, zan shraavnas andar digras
   aasmaan-kad safed phrastu'c tshaay
   sard, zan shaamu'pa'ty bihith tanhaa
   yaavnas peermard kaanh diyi naad

Nadim

7. hanaah nazran tsu' thav *lo'ts traay*, Saqi
8. do'ha aki baalu'po't zoon kha'ts *tso't' hish*
9 myon Vatan, zan maajihund *mwamu'daam* hyoo
navi pwashaakuk *bosh* hyoo
lolu'nyaayan hund *shihul sarposh* hyoo

Not all of these can be translated to any advantage for those who do not know the language : sleep overpowers chinar shades and moonlight dreams ; life seems like a blind old hag, her head shorn of hair ; morning came as gaily as a village beau with a newly-washed, starched white robe ; long, as in mid summer afternoon, the shadows cast by sky-high poplars, and cold as, of a late evening, the recall of his youth long past by a lonely old man ; the moon looked like a pancake as she rose behind the hills ; our motherland, sweetness flowing from mother's breasts, elation of new clothes, the endearing pledges of secrecy after the lovers' fallings-out, and the like.

Meanwhile, Nadim lowered his key to the reflective lyric ; but in whatever key he wrote and whatever he wrote on, his social awareness haunted him though it is no longer blatant. Take his sonnets.

Morning Star*

"subadam ya'ts chu paratshyon gaashitaarukh"

Alone, the morning star is truly forlorn.
Left behind by the shining caravan,
The poor sojourner has lost his way
And scans the sky for his comrades.

---

*Tr. Trilokinath Raina

The tulip, pitying his plight, dragged him down
Into her lap in the form of dew ;
Bounteous earth blessed him with increase ;
Buds on bushes blossomed in twins.

Alone in the sky, coming down he became many ;
Happy comradeship cured the false pride of height ;
A flower among flowers, a pearl in the breeze—
The garden taught him the secret of life.

Erase the ego, and you move forward with the many :
In isolation a bleak death crowns a pointless life.

The Moon

"doha aki baalu'po't zoon kha'ts tso't' hish"

The moon looked like a pancake as she rose
behind the hills. She looked dull as a robe
of Pampore tweed worn off threadbare and torn
at the collar-band out of which peep the scars
on a marble breast, and pale as a counterfeit
silver coin which robs a coolie of
her mite.

The moon looked like a pancake and
the hills looked hungry ; and the clouds put out
the fire in western skies. But in the east
the wood nymphs lit the moon's cooking-stove
in whose soft glow shoots of the steaming rice
seemed to spring upon the hills. I whispered
hope to my hungry belly, and gazed and gazed,
with hungry looks, at the moon-flooded sky.

To Love

"tse' chee naa lola myaane yaad tim doh"

Don't you remember, Love, the days when we
stole furtive glances at each other and

beguiled tomorrows with the unspoken tryst
of love today. I could not make you mine ;
I was too poor. My summer into winter turned,
green leaves on tender boughs turned sere and fell
before my autumn days. It seemed all dark
to me but love shone bright illumining
as beacon light our caravan forging
towards the glorious spring of better times.
And lo ! the spring has burst upon the view ;
love blossoms, the tulip taking after you,
and gentle breezes after love-laden sighs.
The new times augur well because of you.

Whether it is a sonnet or a song, a ghazal or a folk-tune geet, a playful fancy like "gaa'ry maa joo gaa'ry maa joo gaa'ry maa" (water chestnuts ho ! water chestnuts) or a *nazm* with a sustained thought like "Zalarzaa'j" (cobwebs which have bedimmed the image of our country and its heritage)—Nadim's poetry throws up the arresting word, phrase and image.

The distinctive idiom, imagery and craftsmanship could also be discerned in the earlier collections of poems of Rahi (b. 1925—) and Kamil (b. 1924—). Both are "progressives"; but while Rahis' *Sanavu'ny Saaz*, a collection of nine ghazals, steers clear of propaganda, Kamils 144-page *Masmalar* still indulges in it. Both are rich in metaphor and symbolism and have the accent of modernity.

To take Rahi first. The ghazals in his earlier *Sanavu'ny Saaz* have intrinsic merit ; they have hardly a weak line which as ghazals go, is remarkable.

1. gumu'vaani baal sa'ry gay dwadu'kwal
   chi door leekin
   Farhaad tong traavyaa thak dyun
   karyaa gavaaraa

2. zameenas chi kam kam subuh shaam
   haavu'ny

   chi vuni zindagee kuu'ty rang
   aazmaavu'ny

1. The hill-sides are bathed in his sweat,
   but the milk-stream is yet far off.
   Will Farhad cast aside his adze,
   and will he care to rest ?

2. Time has yet to bring forth new mornings
   and new evenings.
   Life has yet to rehearse many and
   various forms.

Rahi's *Nav roz sabaa* of 32 poems won him the Sahitya Akademi Award. It has considerable technical experimentation which in the words of the author's preface, "became inevitable even though there was no tradition of the kind in Kashmiri because these new forms were created under the pressure and urge of the poetic expression." The title appropriately explains the the general tone and content of the poems : " *Nav roz sabaa* is the name of a *naghma*, a composition in Kashmiri classical music which is sung at the conclusion of the night and early beginnings of the dawn. In this *naghma* is found the bitterness and impatience of a night-long waiting as well as the faith and hope in the dawning of the new day." So says the poet, and sings

To meet the morn of the day that is dawning,
See how the hill-tops are all aglow,
See how the tulips have filled their cups
With the warm red blood ot their heart.

Take heart, my dear,
See how the drop seeks out the flood,
See how the tiny spark's eye is aflame.
See the proud mien of the new-born crescent

As proud as that of the full-grown moon.
If love lights its torch in the heart of man,
The dark night flies, the morning comes apace.

This is how the poet uses the familiar metaphors for new concepts. But there are other metaphors and similes making up new imagery appropriate to new contexts and used with a refreshing effect, as in the poems *Zindagee* (Life) and *Tasveeru'ky zu' rwakh* (two sides of a picture):

The stars are weaving a garland of pearls,
Are you going forth to gather your yearnings ?
The waves are rising in the lake and waters tremble,
Has a young old desire awakened in your breast ?

It is difficult to write a good ghazal for the form has a tendency towards triteness and the commonplace ; yet the quality of Rahi's ghazals has a sureness and an intellectual fibre that does not make it very presumptuous on his part to offer them as a present to Ghalib Take, for instance the ghazals beginning.

1. yana caani yinu'c she'ch...
2. yaar sabras raa'zy...
3. rozi javaan taa abad...

But Rahi has outgrown the scope and range of *Nav roz sabaa* in his recent poetry though,in the process, it has become somewhat obscure and difficult. Apart from some of his startling new songs e. g.,

"shrwany ye'li tami ko'r rwani daamaanas
adu' nasaa' roodum nu' paanas taam...,"

his poems have become deeply reflective and introspective. They jump logical exposition and present sudden juxtapositions of ideas. Nor does he evade the observed and experienced reality ; he comes to grips with it, but words sometimes

seem unequal to the stress and strain of the ideas. Here is a poem, entitled *Reh ta Raqs* (the flame and the dance), in illustration. It is sparse of expression, unadorned, almost bare of decorative adjectives ; and, with a collocation of antithetical substantives and images, builds up the theme that life must be seen steady and whole if we may read some sense or meaning in it.

> Beauty's balm and love afire,
> sweet dream and disturbed sleep,
> the blood-red scar in the tulip's breast—
> why at these foils heave long sad sighs ?
> Why miss the wood for trees ? Why lose
> the lovely verse in the tangle of words ?
> Why pensive be ? That way your soul
> will have no rest, your wound no balm.
> Then see it whole, and shun all grief ;
> for, long as winter, drags the time
> when you are far from me but joy,
> when you are by my side, doth fly
> as fast as fleeting joys of spring.
>
> Inevitable birth, inevitable death,
> We're born to die—who consults us ?
> So why complain and why waste time,
> for who is there to heed our plaint ?
> The Heaven a shadow is of man
> and all his prayers here in vain.
> Houris of Paradise, nector divine,
> merely project the wish of man.
>
> Then sport awhile and fondle the waves
> and, childlike, raise fountains of spray,
> True, even in bloom the rose reveals
> its rent ; the thorn your garment tears
> even while nestling to you. What then ?

Wine's bitter yet inebriates
and soothes you softly as the dew.

If in disgust you loathe to stare,
and knit your brow and shrink your heart,
then every flower a cobra may
conceal for you beneath the shade.
Why look for meaning ? There is none.
Why and *wherefore*, you vainly ask.
But the world may something mean to him
who, in the darkness of the night,
the hope of morning keeps alive.

Then cast out grief and sing the song,
and joys of your own youth recall.
Look out for Love and happy be
and open-hearted converse hold ;
and hear the swallow chirp in spring,
in autumn hear the bulbul sing,
in summer gaze at jassemine gay,
in winter, look ! the snow is there.
You have no time. then why delay
and nurse metaphysical grief ?
Play is the thing ; and while it lasts,
why worry if you win or lose ?
Go out and joy in nature find :
cloud horses mount the high hill-tops.
Wherever you look, gay nature weaves
her rarest charms for you and me,
and even the beasts of forest dance.
What more need I ? What more need you ?
My dreams come true and here you are,
and here your fragrant glowing locks.

He tames Time's wild horse, only he
who finds his Love His soul in bloom

imparts new lustre to the world.
The stars this evening will shine bright
for Love and Beauty meet to-night.

In Kamil's earlier 1955 collection of poems there is much exhortation to peasants and labourers—

"mo'zooroo grestyo hushyaar rooziv"—

and some technical experimentation. Even where he uses the old folk poetic form for the new social content, as in *Vigni Vanuvun*, there is unmistakable new idiom and imagery. Here is an earlier sonnet of his in translation.

The Dew

Into the garden quietly came the dew
last night. It had sad news to tell.
Throughout the night it said
what every priest in mosque and temple says,
into the flower's ear whispering as it wept :
"Mortal is the world,
evanescent its laughter and its joys.
With a cry we come, with a wail we go."

The morning sun came up,
mind's mistiness cleared and eyes did see around.
The dew—it shrank with fear,
the dark night's messenger had fled.
The flowers laughed, the buds—
they clapped for joy and burst into bloom.

Even in this lovely little poem on the dew, the poet cannot resist having his 'progressive' fling at the reactionary priest and his temple and mosque. There is, however, a search for metaphors and similes that, like Nadim's *Son Vatan* (our motherland) have the striking quality of newness as against the *laalazaaro, shaalamaaro* repetitiveness of traditional imagery which had begun to pall, as in the poems translated here.

Tulips*

Tulips are in bloom in meadows and on river banks :
Is Spring going gay
At deliverance from Winter's icy clutches ?
Or have lovers dyed in the bright hues of youth
Their passionate sighs and longings ?
The tulip is a like a cup brimful with wine,
A peasant lass in a bright red gown,
A flaming torch,
A red cap left on the road by a forgetful child,
A brave martyr dyed in crimson,
A Rasul Mir aflame with passion
On seeing the swan's grace of his Love,
A bride blushing on seeing her lord,
A flame charmed by a wizard,
The Kartik moon with a lovely mole,
The ruby of Samarkand.

Your Youth

Words vainly struggle to recapture
the grace and beauty of your youth :
the witchery of the kartik moon,
the sharp tingle of the bracing spring breeze,
the sprightliness of the cascade in the woods,
the elation of a tern on a boulder in mid-stream,
the rhythm of the swing under the willow shade,
the freshness of the shy *virykum*,
the animation and the oncoming taste of spring.
Bright as the mid-summer sun on the mid-summer skies ;
startling as the sudden cry, "Fire Ho ! Fire,"
    heard in the last watch of the night ;
awesome as the roaring hill-torrent
    one suddenly comes upon ;

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*Translation by Trilokinath Raina with minor changes.

sparkling as the goblet of wine
bubbling at the brim.
The passion of the sunset glow,
the pregnant hum of the summer afternoon.
You are my youthful dream come true ;
your youth, the passionate longing of my heart.

From this effusiveness of *gulilaala* (Tulips) and *Cyon yaavun* (your youth) and of *Masmalar* generally, Kamil had to go a long way to the restraint and economy, and consequent concentrated effect, of his *Lava ta Prava* (Dewdrops and Sunbeams) which has been given the Sahitya Akademi Award for 1966. Kamil claims that this book of his poems imparts a 'new temper' to Kashmiri verse. The claim is true, which is saying a good deal. It is not merely that there is technical virtuosity ; that he introduces new symbols and images even from Hindu mythology and, as he calls them, new 'turns and twists' of word and idea ; or even that he looks at the world outside and his inner response to it from an unsuspected point of view. All this is there ; but what is refreshingly new is the cumulative result which has a quality of consistence, so to say, of hardness as against anything florid, flabby and sentimental. Poetry such as this is neither a product of, nor a pastime for, relaxed moods. The reader has to grapple with it in poems like *A'ndro't', Pra'ny Shaahraah, Hejaanu'ky Sham'a, Ajha'ly Sanad, Zakhmee Bu'taa* and even in the easier-to-follow *D'al Tufaanas Manz* and *Sanitorium.* His ghazals are uniformly satisfying ; they have ideas that do not derive from earlier romantic poetry and turns of phrase that have freshness of impact. The following may, even in translation, indicate 'the new temper' of which Kamil speaks.

Eternal Longing

On every side as far as the eye can see,
till where the sky and the earth meet,

millenia-old dreariness of an empty world ;
Those craggy heights, these ravines deep
and undulating barren lands,
still as the grave bound by the winter frost.
Neither man nor beast is here
but desperate loneliness.

At intervals it sounds like jackal cries
which make the death-like stillness uglier still.
And in the dry hollows of lightning scorch'ed trees,
as if, perchance, an owl
hooted his ill-omened hoots,
as if a sounding heave evolved a cataclysm ;
as if a fury-fanged viper hissing passed by.
Time paralysed, night unrelieved by day,
only a jaundiced pale light of sick shadows.

O Skies, cry out ; O Earth, speak :
which eagle dropped me at this island peak
    and clawed me thus,
    my body dripping blood ?
Was I not destined for human habitation
swarming with life, a man among men ?

Would that I had a woman by my side
whose glance would my cup of poison mull,
whose smile illume these shadows dark
whose warm touch soothe me with a healing balm !
A rose would bloom in dreariness,
and fear that grips be smashed.
So would I lull her in my lap
    and speak to her,
and tear to shreds this net of loneliness.

How shall I fill my days of doleful loneliness
with neither man nor beast about

and no one near ?
Like the deer tormented by thirst
running in search of a water fount,
I seek the satisfying refuge of love.
Like Adam longing for love's turmoil
and for the eternal loving Eve,
I would entice'd be with her whispering guile.
So some new world might yet be born.

A Dirge

Friends comrades, contemporaries,
perhaps you still remember
and can recall
what flowers are like.

I have forgot.
How could one's heart remember,
youth turned sere, sap dried,
mind and memory crowding out
what once one knew and loved ?
It is a long time since
I have not seen a spring.

Ghulam Rasul Nazki (b. 1909—) has deservedly won recognition as poet both in Urdu and Kashmiri. In his recent book of quatrains, *Namroodnaama*, he has brought to Kashmiri verse an entirely new mood. He divides the 200 quatrains into three sections, one each expressing respectively, the passion of his heart, his deep inner quest, love of God and the Holy Prophet, and his view o1 the contemporary happenings :

"jabeenuk daagh, deenuk sreh, diluk soz,
Madeenk 'ishq, seenuk jashni nau roz,
zamaanuk haal, yaaran hu'nz hikaayat,
zu' hath kathu' tswan hatan baa'tan andar boz"

(You will in these two hundred quatrains find
Proud forehead's scar of vassalage of God,
My ardour for the Faith and Prophet's love,
The story of the times and of my friends.)

The quatrains are the product of a thoughtful mind, centred in faith, *deenuk sreh*, and love of Madeena, *Madeenuk 'ishq*. Technically a 4-line independent little poem with a strict rhyme-scheme, almost always *a a b a*, it needs skill to put a whole idea, mood or perception into a single quatrain. Nazki does this successfully. Like the usual *rubai*, the squib or surprise is in the fourth line; but unlike it, Nazki's *rubais* do not seem to be composed on the spur of the moment to commemorate a passing incident or a random idea. There is a unity of mood and impression in the quatrains of each section. They are an expression of a deep concern profoundly felt, and often suggest more than they say, particularly in the quatrains on the love of God and His Holy Prophet. The best of them are therefore difficult to translate.

1. To land and wealth and orchards, property,
   To fortune, good and bad, and sorrows, joys,
   To horses, cattle, family and friends —
   I bow to countless gods, not One.

2. She sauntered by the rivulet banks,
   The green fields echoed with the fairies' song,
   The fountains, in a flurry, splashed,
   The Spring stole a furtive glance
   And marvelled at the sight.

3. The stars said to the moon, "Why should you be alone?
   See how our mahfil glows!" She looked around and heaved
   A long sad sigh, and then replied, "Would that
   I had a confidant to whom my secret I would tell!'

4. During the day he came but went away at dusk,
   (To test and trifle with my love, so did I feel).
   But in the last watch of the night (they said), he came
   Again ; and finding me asleep, he went away.

5. Entangled in sorrows, I remembered you
   And felt my shoulders light, their load removed,
   My back again unbowed. I felt as if
   A lightning pierced the dark, gloomy clouds ;
   As if my room had lighted up
   With sunbeams dancing through.

6. Whose name is taken together with God's,
   Who is the angel's honoured guest,
   And yet is human for all that—
   His is the acme of prophethood.

7. I know Thy love for me, that Thy concern
   Would not let Thee a moment's rest nor sleep.
   But Lucifer was in Thy confidence,
   Not mine. Why should Thou set him after me ?

8. You looked at me, as if
   The sun shone bright on frozen snow,
   There was a fresh luxuriance of spring,
   The trees turned green, sprounting shoots anew.
   Your many-splendoured brow shone with a radiance rare,
   Unparalleled in this world and in the next.

9. Time was when twenty annas bought a maund
   Of rice, and annas ten a *shilvaar*, cloth
   And all. But now a hundred rupees is
   The price of fuel which barely lasts a month,
   And will not catch the flame nor give out heat.

Not many translations have been made in Kashmiri verse, and even the existing ones are not entirely successful. Khayal's

translation of "Omar Khayyam" is not competent at all, and Hajini's "Mussadas-i-Hali" is only a little better. Translations of Sumitranandan Pant's 35 select poems, by various authors is good only in parts. Firaq's translation of English poems has not yet been published nor that of Nadim's fine translation of the first 69 Gitanjali poems of Tagore.

A word may, at the end, be said about the two volumes of poems of patriotism (Academy publications). Unlike most other patriotic poetry, that of Kashmiri has nothing jingoistic about it. It mainly concerns itself with Kashmir, implicitly emphasizing its self-identity, and hardly looks beyond. Significantly, however, it looks ahead to the future rather than to a revivalist past. It usually celebrates in verse the routine scenic beauties of nature and in a vague manner sings of the tradition of tolerance and amity. Apart from Nadim's *Son Vatan* (our motherland), referred to above, there are a few striking verses here and there, like Kamil's

"vatandaaro, vatan chuy naad laayaan"
(The country is calling you, my countryman)

Or, Muzaffar Azim's—

"asi bo'r vizi vizi lol hayaatas"
(Time and time again
we have offered love to life).

Perhaps the only poem that has the modern accent is Khayal's poem reminiscent of Repert Brooke, translated below :

At the Frontier Post

This spot of earth was scorched by enemy fire
and sprinkled with the blood of man.
At this very spot at the frontier post,
far, far away from home, my comrades dug
a hole and buried my bullet-ridden body :
This body of mine which in its lusty youth

was caressed by my land of birth,
nourished in every fibre for months and years,
by lakes and tarns and vigorous highland breeze,
which saw its glorious sunbirths and sunsets' glow.

Should you, perchance, come to that dreary spot,
the shade of Shalimar chinars will welcome you,
and you will feel rested as on the Dal Lake shores.
The dust you tread upon will into roses bloom,
you cannot step but on a flower-bed.
Here, resting awhile, a thought may tease your mind :
"War came here trailing destruction and death,
drenching this spot with streams of blood,
charging the air with powder and napalm bombs.
How is it then the earth is green again,
and there is a stir of life around ?
Birds fly up in the air,
the breeze blows fresh and cool."
Then standing up you cast a look around,
a tomb obscure will greet your eye,
and you will understand.
This dreary spot will for ever Kashmir be.

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